

thechronicle

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Vandalism may force closure of canal

Stretches of a Black Country canal could be forced to close temporarily after vandals drained a reservoir at a beauty spot.

The water level in the Stourbridge and Dudley canal will become too low for boats to get through if the weather continues to be dry, bosses have warned.

Vandals opened a dam between two pools at Fens Pool Nature Reserve 13 days ago, draining one and causing another to overflow. A lack of rain since the vandalism has left the Grove Pool almost completely dry.

British Waterways general manager Dean Davies said if the water drops they can no longer rely on using the pool to boost levels.

He warned that the canal could ultimately be closed to traffic for days until water is found from other sources.

Damage

Mr Davies said: "It is hugely annoying that for someone's entertainment a lot of inconvenience and damage has been caused.

"We are not having any immediate problems

at the moment but there are concerns that the situation could change unless we have a large amount of rain in the coming weeks.

"There would be problems getting deeper boats through and it could ultimately lead to restrictions or even closures to try to build the water levels back up."

Vandals unscrewed a valve in the dam during the night of Friday, August 12.

A nearby shed business was flooded, damaging timber stocks, and the surrounding paths were left covered in water.

Worry as Government rejects Enterprise Zone bid

NOW WE NEED A BOOST – MP

DUDLEY is in need of urgent help to boost its flagging economy after missing out on an Enterprise Zone boost, according to a borough MP.

A bid to transform the vacant Waterfront complex in Brierley Hill into an EZ was rejected by the Government.

Instead it favoured sites in Darlaston and on the Staffordshire-Wolverhampton border.

By Tim Spiers

tim.spiers@expressandstar.co.uk

The Waterfront proposal would have seen more than 3,000 jobs brought to Dudley, as well as discounts on business rates, high-speed broadband and simplified planning rules.

New offices and industrial units could also have been created but those plans have now been shelved.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin painted a bleak picture of the

borough's future. "I'm pleased they've given the green light to sites in Wolverhampton and Darlaston, but Dudley needs urgent help," he said.

"We lost out on funds for regeneration and job creation in the town when the Government scrapped the regional development agency and now we've got no funding to boost the economy at all."

In contrast Dudley Council's cabinet member for regeneration, Councillor Angus Adams, said Dudley could be thriving again in

the next three years. He insisted that Dudley would benefit from the two selected Black Country sites.

"We haven't been given a reason (why the Dudley bid was rejected) and we're disappointed we didn't get anything but we shall feel the benefit of the other sites," Councillor Adams said.

"It's no good having sour grapes – we've got to get on with it."

"Dudley really is going to be thriving in the next two to three years."

The council's deputy leader Tim Wright, like leader Les Jones, said he was "very disappointed" with the decision to reject the Waterfront site.

Shame

"The Enterprise Zone is a very welcome boost for the whole of the Black Country but it is a real shame that it will not be based in Dudley," he added. "This would have been a real boost to Dudley but we will now continue to work with our neighbours and look forward to the extra business this will bring to the Black Country."

Chris Kelly, MP for Dudley South, said: "Whilst I'm disappointed on the one hand that all of the Dudley borough's designated sites haven't been selected, I am confident that these new enterprise zones will boost the whole Black Country economy."

Probe at school

An investigation has been launched at a Dudley school over concerns on "administrative issues", Dudley Council confirmed. It is being carried out at Priory Primary School, Limes Road.

Chernobyl children get clear vision of the future



Charity organiser Ann Beck and optician Ian Sproson with some of the children

KIND-HEARTED opticians in Stourbridge are providing free eye tests and spectacles to children affected by the Chernobyl disaster.

Robinson and Sproson Opticians, on Worcester Road, Bewdley, are part of the Chernobyl Children's Life Line charity which gives children from around the border of Belarus and Ukraine a month's respite in the UK.

The charity also provides all the necessary health checks for the children while Robinson and Sproson's helps provide free eye tests and spectacles for those who need them.

Ian Robinson, optician and partner at Robinson and Sproson Opticians, said: "It is extremely rewarding to do it for them, knowing how much it would cost for a similar service at home."

The opticians have helped more than 150

children in the six years they have been part of the scheme, after being approached when a larger opticians pulled out.

Ian Robinson has done lots of work in Romania and knows what conditions of eye tests can be like in Eastern Europe.

He added: "In Britain we have the highest standard of opticians in Europe and this sort of service would not be available to them anywhere else."

Humbling

"The kids are always polite and grateful. It really is a humbling experience because they have so little and we have so much."

The opticians will also be holding a barbecue to raise some money for the charity, but Mr Robinson insists it's much better to see the effect it has first hand.

He said: "It's great to see the look of shock and amazement on their faces when they put their first pair of glasses on."

Bonfire prices are held

ADMISSION prices for this year's bonfire event at Himley Park will stay the same as last year's prices, it has emerged.

The annual fireworks display attracts around 20,000 people each year.

Charges went up in 2010 and Dudley Council said this year they will stay at £8 for adults and £4 for children.

Family tickets will also remain at £20 with car parking pegged at £3.

The fees are expected to be rubber stamped on September 1.

Cultural hub plan for historic wharf

MULTI-MILLION pound plans to transform the historic Stourbridge Wharf into a creative and cultural hub have been unveiled.

Extra visitor moorings along the canal, retail outlets, studios and performing arts spaces are all included in proposals centring around the old canal docks.

Also included are restaurants and some new housing.

The move comes after a highly-anticipated project to restore and reopen the boarded-up Moorings Tavern in Canal Street was granted approval last month.

Meanwhile, plans to build 135 new homes alongside the canal are due to go

before Dudley planning committee in October.

Regeneration chief Councillor Angus Adams said the council wanted to exploit the potential of the site to improve the outskirts of Stourbridge town centre.

He said: "We already have the Bonded Warehouse on the wharf at the moment which is popular, and we want to build on that and bring more cultural and leisure things into the area."

"It will open up the gateway to the town, bringing more people into Stourbridge and making it a more pleasant place to live."

"There has been an interest in doing this for a long time and now it seems we are finally making some progress with applications already going through development control."

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Success for waste centre

A RECYCLING project at Halesowen Leisure Centre has been hailed a success. Staff and customers have recycled more than 54 tons of rubbish since the scheme started two years ago.

The centre has collected nearly 1,000 bags of plastic bottles and 30 bins of waste paper which are collected by recycling firm Sita UK and recycled into new products including corrugated cardboard and tissue paper. The centre has also saved more than £1,500 through the reduction of waste products.

Student delight over A success

THOUSANDS of students across Dudley have been celebrating another year of top A-level results.

There were plenty of smiles as pupils throughout the borough flocked to their schools and colleges to find out their grades. Among them were happy students at Dudley College which reported a 100 per cent pass rate in 26 subjects.

Sellani McKenzie, aged 18, of Clement Place, Bilston, achieved two As, a B and a D in law, maths, sociology and psychology. "I'm so pleased - I was sure I would fail one but I haven't," she said. "I'm really looking forward to going off to uni now I don't have to worry any more - I'm going to the University of Kent to do law which will be great. I'm definitely off out to celebrate."

Another happy student was Jack Weston, 18, of Prince Street, Cradley Heath, who achieved two As and a C in maths, accountancy and chemistry. "I am over the moon with it," he said.

Confirmed

He said he is now heading to Aberystwyth University in September to study maths. Principal Lowell Williams said the overall pass rate was 97 per cent. "This is an extremely pleasing set of results from the students studying in our A level Academy."

Meanwhile 27 students at Old Swinford Hospital School in Stourbridge had extra reason to celebrate after achieving three or more A* or A grades. The overall pass rate at the school was 99 per cent. Four students had their places confirmed at Oxbridge on the strength of their results, including Ross Williamson from Hagley, who will study human sciences at Oxford University.

Students and staff at Edgecliff High School in Kinver were also marking record results.

Cheers, tears and celebrations echoed through King Edward VI College, Stourbridge, as students collected one of the most successful sets of results the school has ever seen.

Pupils shared hugs and frantically phoned their parents to let them know whether or not they had made the grade and would be off to university in the autumn.

Among the crowd was Sian Horseman, 19, who worked hard to get three A*s and two As after



Top students from King Edward VI College are, from left: Sam Fowkes, India Raybould, Sian Horseman and Jonathan Hunt

having to take a year out last year due to illness. "I'm very very pleased, especially after everything last year," she said.

Her subjects included law, business studies and geography, and her top marks now mean she can go on to study geography at the University of Birmingham and hopes eventually to become a geography teacher or a planner.

Meanwhile, new Oxbridge student Sam Fowkes, 18, of Highfield Crescent, Halesowen, learned he would be heading off to the University of Oxford to study philosophy, politics and economics after achieving one A* and two As. "It's just unbelievable - I'm absolutely thrilled," he said. "I called my mum and she started crying down the phone, she was so happy."

India Raybould, aged 20, of Long Close, Hagley, achieved one of the highest set of results at the college, getting four A*s and three As in subjects including history, sociology, psychology and general studies.

"I'm so surprised - I worked really hard but never imagined I would get results like this," she

said. She said thanks to her high grades, she has been accepted for a place at the University of Manchester to study psychology.

And Jonathan Hunt, 18, of Handley Close, Halesowen, achieved two A*s and three As in dance, English, psychology and biology. "I'm really pleased - English especially is a total surprise," he said. "I can go and study physiotherapy at Cardiff in September now."

Record

Overall, the college achieved a pass rate of 96.1 per cent and Halesowen announced record results with 98.6 per cent of students achieving a pass.

Katie Barwell, from Sedgley, was celebrating with her mother Jane as she achieved A grades in law, history and English literature and an A grade in AS communications.

The former pupil of Dormston School, aged 18, will now be studying English literature at Birmingham University.

Katie said: "I am delighted with my results, it has been nerve wracking but I will definitely be



All smiles and celebrations from Aimee Millward, left, Rosa Denby and Emma Bate with fellow students from Dudley College's Broadway Campus

celebrating later with my friends and family." Her mother added: "I am so pleased for Katie, she has worked extremely hard and really deserves this success."

Another student celebrating was Abhimanyu Jaishwal who is going on to study pharmacy at Aston University. The 18-year-old from Bearwood picked up his results today and achieved an A in maths, A in psychology, B in chemistry and an A in AS biology. He said: "I am looking forward to studying at Aston University and I am so pleased with my results."

Eighteen-year-old Danielle Newman achieved A grades in maths, psychology and law and a B in further maths. She will be studying psychology at Birmingham University.

Danielle, from Smethwick and a former pupil of Brinstall High School, said: "I am so pleased with my results, we are all really on a high."

Principal Keith Bate said: "I am delighted with this record breaking year recognising the tremendous hard work and commitment of students."

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Archives move will bring 60-year debt

PLANS to move an archives service into a £6million new building would leave a 60-year debt well over twice that size.

Dudley Council is consulting the public on proposals to create the base on the site of the former Royal Brierley Crystal factory in Tipton Road, Dudley.

As well as housing Dudley's archives, part of the premises would be rented to Sandwell Council for storage.

Sandwell is not contributing to the costs of the scheme.

The development will cost £6m to build but the council will borrow more than £5m. At the current 5.15 per cent interest rate, the total price of the scheme including the cost of borrowing over 60 years, is expected to be £13.8m.

The archives are currently based at a former school in Coseley which would be redeveloped for housing.

Toxic

Brian Guest, spokesman for a campaign group to save the base at the former Mount Pleasant School, said: "It's disgusting, in this day and age, that the council wants to pass on a toxic debt of £13.8m to our children - and our children's children."

"If they haven't got the money, they shouldn't spend it," said 68-year-old Mr Guest. He discovered the cost after asking the council for more information.

Council chiefs say the archives service has almost outgrown its existing building and such borrowing is commonplace.

Councillor Les Jones, leader of Dudley Council, said: "In the long run the new building will reduce its running costs by generating its own electricity through solar PV panels on the roof."

Artist returns to his wooden sculpture



Front, Jonathan Mulvaney, who restored his statue in Priory Park, Dudley, pictured with senior park ranger Lydia Wilde and Councillor David Stanley

AN ARTIST came out of retirement to restore a landmark sculpture he made for a Dudley park 20 years ago.

The work was carried out as part of a £2.6million overhaul of Priory Park in Dudley. The carved oak statue, commissioned in 1991, stands near to the park's lily pond.

Jonathan Mulvaney, aged 58, who carved the original from a five-ton piece of oak, was persuaded by Dudley Council to return to restore some detailing to the work which shows people of different ages and cultures.

He now lives in Bath and says he was "humbled" to be asked to return.

Curry is the goal for team

TWO charity curry evenings at a Wall Heath restaurant have helped raise more than £1,500 for a football team in the village.

Staff at the Alam International Restaurant in Albion Parade have handed over a cheque for £1,622 to the Kewford Eagles which was raised from ticket sales for the events as well as raffles and an auction. The club is working on a project which will see 11 football pitches built on land adjacent to Kingswinford Rugby Club in Wall Heath.

Lynn Boleyn, club welfare officer, said: "We have more than 500 children playing for our club, including those with additional needs, as well as adult teams."

"We have been working extremely hard since obtaining planning permission to raise the funding necessary. We have already raised a substantial amount of around £500,000. We are extremely grateful to local people like Joe Uddin and Alan Emery at The Alam for their generosity."

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Man was found dead by girlfriend

A BLACK COUNTRY man was found dead on a bathroom floor by his girlfriend after injecting himself with heroin, an inquest heard.

Gavin Goodwin, aged 42, died at the house he shared with a friend in Round Street, Netherton, in the early hours of May 18.

Dudley Coroner's Court heard on August 11 that Mr Goodwin had not been a regular drug user and so his body did not have a strong tolerance towards the heroin.

Shortly before his death he had been up late drinking with his friend and told him he needed "a buzz".

The inquest heard Mr Goodwin had then arranged to meet someone in Wolverhampton and left in a taxi with his girlfriend Helen Cord. Later they returned to the house in Netherton.

Miss Cord woke at around 4.15am, went downstairs and found Mr Goodwin on the bathroom floor.

Black Country coroner Robin Balmain recorded a verdict of accidental death.

School plan in go-ahead

PLANS to refurbish and expand the entrance and staff facilities at a Kingswinford school have been given the go-ahead.

Governors at Dawley Brook Primary School say the current entrance is considered "tired" and "not very welcoming". The school will also get a new reception area and administration office plus a refurbished and expanded staff room.

Ponies settle into their new home



Rescued ponies Heathcliff and Patrick seen with Wendy Hartley, centre, and stable assistants Susie Ecclestone, aged 28, left, and Laura Baldwin, 19

POLICE action has helped ensure that Black Country residents no longer fear stray horses rampaging over their gardens and streets.

Now two little ponies have gone on to pastures new in rural Staffordshire.

Since April 16, when police launched an initiative to round up horses reported on Dudley's roads, a total of more than 40 animals have been taken out of harm's way.

Among them are two neglected young colts that have now been given a home by Wendy Hartley, who lives near Stafford.

She is nursing them back to health. Her children Jodie, aged 24, Rachael, 21, and Cassie, 18, have named the pair Heathcliff and Patrick. They have settled into the

family's stables near Stafford.

Wendy, 48, who runs a saddle company with her 54-year-old husband John, said: "Heathcliff and Patrick are probably Welsh ponies and are about nine months old."

"But they have been neglected and are very thin," she added. "We are building Heathcliff and Patrick up with some real good feed and generally giving them some TLC. Eventually, when they are ready, I will find them a good home."

Anyone wanting to report a stray horse can call police on 0845 113 5000. And anyone wishing to give a home to one of the strays should contact Sgt Tomkinson on 0845 113 5000, ext 7902 6711.



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Sick days shoot up in health service

NHS workers in the West Midlands have taken many more sick days off than the previous year, new figures reveal.

The regional health authority has seen the amount of days lost through staff absence soar as the NHS faces radical reforms and morale in the health service has been hit.

NHS West Midlands, which employs more than 440 people, said it has seen the number of sick days lost increase from 2,102 in 2009/10 to 2,489 in 2010/11, a rise of nearly 18.5 per cent.

This means the equivalent of a total of 6.8 years lost through sickness at the Strategic Health Authority (SHA) which has overall responsibility for the NHS in the West Midlands.

More than 40 per cent of staff at the health authority had some time off sick during the 12 months with an average amount of seven days per worker.

Abolished

The SHA covers 49 separate NHS organisations including 19 major hospitals, seven mental health trusts, 16 primary care trusts and the region's ambulance services.

But under plans announced by the Government the health authority will be abolished along with primary care trusts.

A majority of the funding and decisions on local health services will be passed to groups of GPs.

Norma Harvey, spokesman for NHS West Midlands, said the percentage increase was large because the authority employed a small number of people.

She said: "The SHA is a relatively small NHS employer with 443 employees, 343.98 whole time equivalent. A small change in sickness absence can therefore have a large impact on percentages."

She said data was rounded up to the nearest five which also has an impact. "The good news is around 58 per cent of SHA employees had no sickness absence at all during the year."

Stuff for Wall of Fame

TWO leading Black Country music industry figures are celebrating after earning a spot on the Wall of Fame at Wolverhampton's Civic Hall.

Miles Hunt is lead singer of rock band The Wonder Stuff, formed in Stourbridge.

The singer and guitarist, will be joined on the iconic wall by Sam Jukes, who started the JBs music venue in Dudley.

Shrine

The pair join the likes of Slade frontman Noddy Holder MBE who was the first performer to have his name added to the shrine, in the main hall behind the stage, when it was first launched in 2008.

Since then the likes of boxing promoter Ron Gray, Glenn Hughes from the band Black Country Communion, Led Zeppelin drummer John Bonham and his son Jason, as well as Dave Hill, Jimmy Lea and Don Powell, all from Slade, have been added to the wall.

Miles Hunt, aged 45 said it was brilliant to join the wall of fame alongside Sam.



Miles Hunt and Sam Jukes celebrate being added to the Civic Hall's wall of fame

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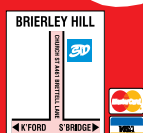
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Trailer is stolen at factory

AN ARTICULATED trailer loaded with £50,000 worth of tyres has been stolen from a Brierley Hill firm.

Thieves broke into the factory yard at CVT Vehicle Services in Oldbury and stole the trailer which was later dumped at an industrial estate in Union Road, Oldbury.

They broke in through padlocked gates.

Pc Ian Leech, leading the inquiry, said: "There were 650 Bridgestone tyres in the trailers which were to be delivered to various motor vehicle companies."

"These tyres are all marked with a red and yellow dot which means they cannot be sold on to independent retailers."

Pc Leech added: "Unfortunately there is no CCTV footage available for us to identify the offenders but I would ask member of the public to contact Dudley Police if they know where these tyres might be stored or if they have been approached to buy or sell the tyres on."

The theft happened over the weekend of July 16-18.

Church date for Songsters

THE GENTLEMEN Songsters from Kingswinford will be performing at St Peter's Church, Kinver, on October 1.

And, starting in September, Hazel and Brian Harris will be holding a coffee morning at their home in Meddins Lane, Kinver every third Tuesday of the month.

The coffee mornings will start at 10.30am.

All proceeds will go to St Peter's Church.

Joy for residents over planners' No to mast

PLANS for a 41ft phone mast overlooking homes in Wollaston have been booted out by planning officers who labelled it an "alien feature" which would blight the landscape.

More than 1,000 residents signed a petition against plans for a new mast at the corner of Bridle Road and Vicarage Road.

Some 111 other letters of objection were lodged with Dudley Council's planning department.

Benefits man in Tenerife

A FATHER-OF-TWO who claimed more than £4,000 in benefits while living in Tenerife has been fined £100.

Rickie Sambrook, aged 38, moved there to "avoid detection" for other charges he faced, Dudley Magistrates Court heard.

Sambrook left his wife and children at home in Halesowen Road, Cradley Heath, and lived abroad for 11 months from October 2008.

Miss Claire Beddoe, prosecuting on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions, said Sambrook began claiming support legitimately in 2005.

But leaving the country meant he was not entitled to it. He was overpaid £4,017.

Sambrook pleaded guilty to failing to notify the DWP of a change in circumstances. He was fined £100 and ordered to pay £25 costs and a £15 surcharge.

They claimed the mast would be too close to The Woodlands residential care home and St James' CE Primary School, and raised fears on traffic and health.

Ward councillor Nic Barlow has helped lead the campaign and welcomed the decision. "It is fantastic news," he said.

"There has been an overwhelming strength of feeling against these proposals and, hopefully, the applicant will bear that in mind and not try to pursue an appeal. We are delighted that officers have decided to refuse it even before it went before the planning committee."

Roadside

Mobile phone giants Telefonica O2 UK and Vodafone applied for the mast.

Residents staged roadside protests, pulled together a petition and lobbied Stourbridge MP Margot James over the plans.

A report published by planning officers states: "The proposal would be a visually prominent and alien feature. It would be an intrusive feature detrimental to the living conditions of nearby occupiers."

Volunteers stage a big clean-up

AROUND 60 community-spirited volunteers took to the streets of Lye for a litter pick.

The team, armed with rubbish bags, started from Valley Road Youth and Community Centre and cleared up the surrounding roads.

Residents were helped by volunteers from the Big Clean Up project in Nether-ton, which regularly organises litter picks to improve the community.

Dudley Council spokesman Phil Parker said the event was part of a series of activities in Lye called Operation Teamwork to encourage people to help in their neighbourhoods.

Housing advice and tips on preventing burglaries were also available during the two-day event. Free property marking kits were handed out both to deter burglars and make it easier to identify people's belongings if they are stolen.

People could also register their mobile phones on a national database called Immobilise which helps police identify the owner of lost and stolen phones.

Also available were free fire risk assessments for people's homes to identify potential dangers and offer solutions.

Representatives from The Dudley Community Safety Team and West Midlands Probation Trust were also on hand to talk to visitors.



Dudley Community Safety Team commissioning manager Bob Dimmock with Sgt Rachel Turner and Michael Tatcher of the Probation Trust

Council seeking register changes

DUDLEY Council has launched its annual canvass as part of the first stage of compiling the new electoral register.

All 130,000 households across the borough should have received the forms detailing everyone at the address who appears on the current register.

Residents are asked to make any changes so the forms include everyone over the age of 18 or those reaching this age by November 30, 2012.

As well as British, Irish Republic or Commonwealth citizens, people from European countries should also be included.

This information will be used to produce December's new updated electoral register.

Confirm

If there is no change to the information already shown on the form, residents can confirm their registration by calling free phone 0800 197 4911 or on-line at www.registerbyinternet.co.uk/dudley

In all cases the security codes shown on the registration form will be needed.

Alternatively the form can be signed and returned in the pre-paid envelope.

If any changes are required to the form these should be made and the form should be signed and returned in the pre-paid envelope.

Alison Malkin, of electoral services, said: "It is really important that people fill in these forms accurately to ensure those who should register are on it."



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thechronicle

Church hopes to ring out with electronic bells

A DETAILED blueprint costing up to £100,000 has been drawn up by parishioners desperate to renovate a Black Country church.

New electronic bells with speakers installed in the bell tower could ring out as part of the transformation for Christ Church, Quarry Bank.

Councils rake in the fines

NEARLY £2.5million in parking fines has been raked in by Midland councils during the space of 12 months.

New figures show Sandwell came top in 2010/11 with £810,000, while Dudley made £330,000 and Wolverhampton £580,000.

Council bosses have insisted that fines are not issued just to make money.

Some of the region's authorities have seen a slight drop in the number of penalties handed out but they say tackling parking problems is still a priority.

Of the region's authorities Sandwell Council pulled in the most money, collecting £810,992 in 2010/11. The authority issued a total of 30,422 penalty notices. The year before it had £840,882 from 32,732 notices issued.

Councillor Derek Rowley, Sandwell's cabinet member for neighbourhoods, said: "It's not about making money. Proper parking arrangements help keep our roads as congestion-free and safe as possible."

The restoration could be the catalyst to regenerate an ailing High Street, say campaigners. The bell sounds would play out on special occasions such as weddings and christenings.

Christ Church, off High Street, has only a single bell at the moment.

Various improvements have been identified by parishioners and members of the town's own friends group. Chairman of the Friends of Quarry Bank, Brian Genner, said the plans were exciting. "We have considered improving the peal or ring of the bells to make it more traditional sounding," he said.

Priority

The church's organ is also in need of work costing up to £50,000. But Mr Genner said there are fears it could have to be replaced if works prove too costly.

Plaster works and general decorating have been earmarked as a priority. Church members are also keen to make more of the main body of the building for community use and might put in removable pews and stage.

Mr Genner added: "I must reiterate that these are all simply ideas which we have drawn up at this stage."

Full plans will be submitted to Dudley Council and the Diocese of Worcester in the coming months.

Sarah has beady eyes



Artist Sarah Jones has moved into Studio Seven at the Red House Glass Cone

THREE years ago, teaching assistant Sarah Jones decided she needed a hobby and began searching for an art class. But none of the painting, sculpting and other craft courses seemed right - until she stumbled across a glass bead-making workshop at the now-closed International Glass Centre in Brierley Hill.

Now the mother-of-three is a qualified lampwork glass artist, working five days a week creating and selling her own beads and has just moved into a large studio at the Red House Glass Cone in Wordsley. "I fell in love with it instantly," said Sarah, aged 41, of Milton Road, Coseley, who still works two days a week at Woodseton School in Sedgley.

She linked up with another glass student, Jane Ellis, of Norton, and they decided to go into business together.

Part of the Made at the Cone collective of designers, the pair can be found in Studio Seven every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday.

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Fears for artefacts at the abbey site

HISTORIC artefacts at an 800-year-old abbey could be lost as work starts on new homes and a visitor centre, campaigners have warned.

The Halesowen Abbey Trust is concerned that features could be damaged when diggers move into the site later this year.

And campaigning members say they want to ensure that projects like this "never happen again".

All change at the hospital

MORE THAN 90,000 hospital appointments were rearranged in Dudley in 15 months - with some patients given new dates up to 10 times.

A new system to reduce the number of rescheduled and cancelled outpatient appointments is now on trial at the borough's three hospitals.

Almost half the slots were changed with less than six weeks' notice by bosses at the Dudley Group of Hospitals, with staff annual leave being one of the reasons for the postponements.

Between April 2010 and June this year, there were 93,902 appointments which had to be rearranged.

Patients were given less than six weeks' notice for 40,888 of these slots.

Eighteen patients had their appointments rescheduled more than five times and one patient had 10 changes, Paula Clark, of the Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust said staff were working to reduce rescheduling.

Work is due to start in the autumn on the development at the 800-year-old abbey.

The trust opposed the plans and, along with local MP James Morris, has called for an archaeological dig to be carried out before any building starts. The £500,000 project will see six barns become homes and a new visitor centre built.

Honorary secretary of the trust, Mick Freer, said: "All work requiring Scheduled Monument Consent should be carefully evaluated before agreeing to it."

"The barns overlay the most sensitive area of archaeological interest."

Committed

"English Heritage have previously expressed confidence that the site will not be damaged but the trust remains unconvinced."

Planning permission was granted in February for the work and, though campaigners admit they cannot stop it going ahead, they say they are committed to protecting the abbey.

Mr Freer added: "I want to make sure that repetitions of such damaging works to this nationally important site never happen again."

An English Heritage spokesman said: "The ruins of the abbey are scheduled as an ancient monument and some of the farmstead is listed."

Into the dragon's den



Rebecca Bayliss, aged 14, and 10-year-old sister Abigail meet Ed the bearded dragon at Gornal Library

YOUNG readers at a Black Country library were rewarded for their hard work by getting the chance to see a range of animals up close.

Children taking part in the summer reading challenge at Gornal Library, Abbey Road, got the chance to attend the event which featured a visit by Dudley Zoo animals.

Keepers from the attraction, in Castle Hill, brought along a bearded dragon, white rat, snake, guinea pig and cockroaches for the youngsters to see and touch. More than 100 youngsters at the library have taken on the challenge of reading six books over the summer holiday. Librarian Alison Bryant said it had been a wonderful event.

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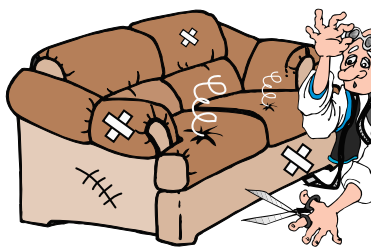
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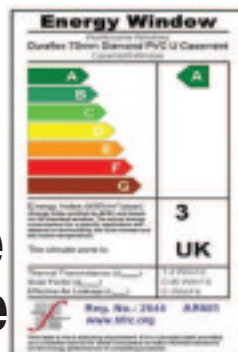
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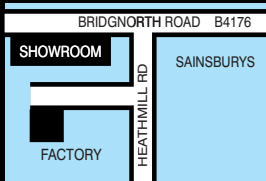
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Wendy conquers Mont Blanc



Wendy back at home after her gruelling climb

JUST six months ago, sporty university researcher Wendy Nicholls sat reeling in a doctor's chair as the news was broken – she had skin cancer.

A whirlwind few weeks followed as she underwent an emergency operation to remove the mole and any tissue which may have been affected, and biopsies were taken to test whether the disease had spread.

But the brave 31-year-old, who is also a member of the Dudley-Kingswinford Running Club, has now fought her way back to fitness – and earlier this month conquered the 15,774ft-high Mont Blanc for charity.

"One day I just noticed that a mole on my arm was bleeding. I didn't think much of it but when it happened again a couple of weeks later, I thought I should get it checked," said the University of Wolverhampton psychological researcher.

"The doctor told me it was probably nothing to worry about so when they

called me in to Russells Hall Hospital I just went on my own. I was stunned," said Miss Nicholls, of Goldthorn Terrace, Penn, Wolverhampton.

"As part of my work I have researched how hospitals talk to cancer patients and suddenly they were saying this to me – it just felt so surreal."

She was immediately whisked off to be screened for MRSA, and went under the knife a week later, on February 23.

"They took so much off, it just felt like one of those tight blood pressure monitors strapped around my arm all the time."

Choice

She then had to undergo an operation to test her lymph nodes to see whether the cancer had spread anywhere else – and luckily, it hadn't.

"That's when I decided to do something big to raise money – and Mont Blanc just seemed like the best choice," she said.

"After several weeks of not being able to do anything, my fitness levels had dropped so I started doing short runs with the Dudley-Kingswinford Running Club

again, and joined the West Bromwich Mountaineering Club where they really helped prepare me for the climb.

"It was the scariest thing I have ever had to do in my life but I'm so proud of myself for getting out there and not letting this beat me. It was really emotional – it was so beautiful and I was so tired I burst into tears at the top."

The three-day climb, which she completed at the start of the month, has raised £831.38 and she is aiming for £1,000 to donate to cancer charity Macmillans.

Wendy, who now faces a visit to Russells Hall Hospital every three months for regular check-ups, said the charity had been a huge help.

"I never sunbathe and the only time I went on a sunbed was when I was 15, and I was so scared I got out before my five minutes were up," she added.

"Apparently though long-distance runners are more susceptible to it though as you spend so much time outside."

To donate to Wendy's efforts, visit <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/wendynicholls>



Wendy on her ascent of Mont Blanc

New £250,000 appeal bid for church work

A LANDMARK Stourbridge church, which is celebrating its 275th anniversary, has launched a new appeal to raise £250,000 for restoration work.

Renovation projects to the tune of more than £400,000 have already been carried out at St Thomas's in Market Street, including bringing the church galleries back into use and replacing rotten windows in the church hall.

The weather vane on the tower has also been restored.

In addition, churchgoers have installed an information plaque in the grounds with details about the building's history.

However, the church still needs to raise another £250,000 to fund the restoration of the organ and improve the lighting and sound systems. It also plans to upgrade the church hall facilities and improve disabled access at the site.

Churchwarden Wendy Hemming said: "We need to replace the lighting and sound systems so they meet the requirements of the 21st century for services and concerts, and to totally refurbish the church hall, the meeting place for many community activities."

A flower show held last month helped to raise £3,000 towards the appeal.

History

Churchgoers have also installed a new automatic mechanism to control the clocks in the tower, thanks to a grant from Dudley Council's Stourbridge Area Committee. The church's history began in 1726 when town people, fed up of trekking to church in Oldswinford, began raising funds for a new chapel.

Construction work of the church building, which cost £2,300 was completed in 1736 while the tower was finished in 1759.

Over the years, changes include the addition of entrance porches in 1890 and a church hall in 1910.

Today the building is used for many purposes from choir practice to tai chi.

Donations for the appeal can be sent to St Thomas's Church, Market Street, Stourbridge, DY5 1AQ.

Cash in memory of Leon

A FOOTBALL team achieved its goal of raising cash in memory of a tragic Black Country teenager when it took on workers from a firm in a charity match.

Members of Pensnett Panthers under-18 side and staff from Fern Plastics, Wolverhampton, staged the match at Brierley Hill's Dell Stadium on August 14.

It was organised by team manager Paul Handley as the squad was keen to do something in honour of 14-year-old Halesowen schoolboy Leon Mansell, who died in January after suffering a heart attack.

Mr Manley decided to get Fern workers and directors involved as it is the firm where Leon's mother Jean is employed as a press operator.

Staff trained twice a week over the summer in preparation for the big game – but were beaten 6-1 by the youngsters.

Cash raised from the event will go to the Cardiac Risk in the Young charity.

Businesses from Dudley, Stourbridge and Halesowen donated prizes for the event and the Cophorne Hotel, Brierley Hill, provided refreshments.

Mr Handley said: "We are really grateful to all the sponsors and to all the spectators who really dug deep for the fundraiser."

He added that he was "especially proud" of the young team for their efforts in the event.

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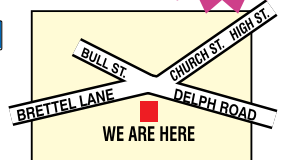


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Set up by three cousins, Robert, Edward and William, the Company now employs a second generation of the family at its three stores in Birmingham/Solihull, Dudley and Manchester, providing continuity for customers and a wealth of product knowledge.

Robert and Edward remain very actively involved in the business, with Robert as the company Chairman. They have recently strengthened the management team to ensure the continued future success of the company.

John Shotton, Robert's eldest son, who has worked at Cousins since 1994, is now Managing Director. John has enjoyed an extensive retailing career and 17 years ago, joined Cousins.

Matt Shotton, Robert's youngest son, started at Cousins in 1997 and has worked in most areas of the business. He is Retail Director with full responsibility for bed buying - and overall control of the Company's three large retail Stores.

Richard Foster is Operations Director and has been with Cousins for 15 years. He initially started as a bedding consultant when Cousins opened their second store in Dudley in 1996 and has been involved in most areas of the business.

Edward's son **Thomas Shotton**, helps to manage the Dudley store along with **Roger Horner**, who joined Cousins from the opening of the Dudley store in 1996.

The original store and warehouse in Birmingham opened in 1985. **Pat Shiels** has recently been appointed Store Manager of the Birmingham store and brings a wealth of retail experience to the company.

In 1996, the Company expanded further, creating a landmark store in Dudley. This expansion continued with the opening of a third flagship store on Regent Road in Salford, Manchester in 2005. The store, was opened by stars of Coronation Street



Standing from left to right, Thomas and Matthew Shotton, Richard Foster. Sitting Edward, Robert and John Shotton.

and has been widely acclaimed as England's finest furniture store. It is managed by **David Fisher**, who has extensive experience of furniture retailing.

The Company is now celebrating its' 26 years in furniture retailing and despite the difficult economic climate, Managing Director John Shotton is looking forward with confidence.

He said "In these days of large chains, we are still very much a family business - and our success over previous years has been built on offering high quality personal service to our customers and the widest selection of designer living room, dining room, bedroom, kitchen and flooring ranges from leading manufacturers - at prices that customers can afford.

The last 26 years have been a great period for the Company and the whole family are justifiably proud of how far we have come," he said. "We have a fantastic team of staff, some of whom have been here since we opened our doors in 1985. We couldn't have become such a success without their continual hard work and dedication.

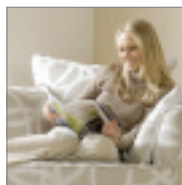
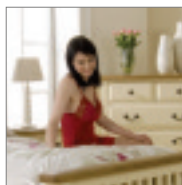
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Repairs start at Stuart Crystal

WORK has begun to repair damage wreaked by arsonists at a historic former glass factory in Wordsley.

It marks a boost for plans to transform Grade II-listed Stuart Crystal Glassworks into a £5million museum.

Once the £100,000 repairs have been done, planning can continue for the complex which will be linked to the nearby Red House Glass Cone via an underground tunnel.

There were fears the building would have to be demolished, throwing the scheme into doubt, but engineers declared the main structure could be saved.

The roof collapsed during the blaze in May, which also gutted the building and damaged some of the walls.

Since then there have been a number of vandalism attacks. The need for planning permission and listed building consent was waived as the work by site owners Complex Developments was needed urgently.

The roof will be replaced, while some high levels of the walls will be demolished and rebuilt.

Demolition is under way at 76-year-old primary school



A JCB loading vehicle seen at work at the site



Workers planning the next stage of the school demolition job

Demolition work has begun at a former primary school in Quarry Bank as part of a £7.6million revamp of the site.

The old Quarry Bank Primary School building is making way for a new sports pitch, garden and car park.

A new school has already been built next to the old site and is ready for children to start in September. The old school in the High Street, which dates back to 1935, was no longer fit for purpose after the walls began crumbling. Workers have been taking down brickwork in stages.

The gradual demolition is under way to reduce the risk of damaging the nearby school buildings.

Timber and tiles were first stripped from the roof and recycled.

Contractors Bowmer and Kirkland plan to have all the work done by the start of the new term on September 5.

Site manager Brian Appleby said: "Work is progressing well and we are on target to finish on time."

"As everything went to plan so far we had time to remove some of the materials gradually and recycle them."

Most classrooms at the new school will have external teaching areas and the school will be energy efficient through the use of solar panels and triple glazed windows.

Revamp

The school's recently-built children's centre will remain on the site as will the listed Victorian caretaker's house.

Dudley Council said the present school building was no longer fit for purpose and needed a revamp.

The school will be equipped with state of the art technology and IT systems. Architectural designs have been drawn up to allow as much natural light in to the new building as possible.

The new premises will contain a nursery for 45 children and two classrooms for children with language learning difficulties, which will each hold 12 students.

A new 49-space car park will be created alongside a sports field, playgrounds and school garden.

Addict is jailed for fuel theft

ADRU addict siphoned off diesel from vehicles on a Black Country building site, planning to sell it to fund her habit, a court was told.

Leanne Homer was caught in the act by police after they were called to the site in Norwood Road, Brierley Hill, on July 10.

Dudley Magistrates' Court heard on August 16 that the 26-year-old tried to flee but she was arrested and admitted going to the building site with plastic drums to take the diesel.

A man was arrested but police have discontinued the case against him.

Homer admitted taking the fuel at a previous hearing.

She also pleaded guilty to failing to attend court for an earlier hearing.

Magistrates sentenced her to 12 weeks' imprisonment. She was also jailed for two weeks for failing to attend the hearing, that sentence to be served concurrently.



Inside one of the school's classrooms

Struggling pub may become a home

PLANS to convert a struggling Stourbridge pub into a new family home have been lodged amid concerns from residents at a new retirement complex next door over noise.

Under the proposals The Cottage Inn in Enville Street, Stourbridge, would undergo a major programme of repair works and be transformed into a four-bedroomed family home.

The pub went on the market, with owners citing declining business and the site was bought earlier this year by Churchill Retirement Living Ltd.

Churchill is selling off apartments at the new Spicer Lodge retirement development next door, which was officially opened in July by showbiz star Lionel Blair.

Potential

Senior planning officer at Churchill, Andrew Burgess, said the concerns of potential buyers had been shared by existing residents in the area over trouble at the pub.

"The opportunity arose to purchase the Cottage Inn and we thought it would be beneficial for our development and for the community in general to stop its use as a public house and instead create a residential property," he said.

"There was spare land at the rear of the pub which has also given us the opportunity to create some extra parking spaces for residents and visitors to the Spicer Lodge development."

A design and access statement submitted in support of the plans states: "There has been some concern relating to the noise and behaviour associated with the use of the Inn."

"The change of use will create a better neighbour in this residential location."

Charity cash in the bag

SHOPPERS at a Dudley supermarket dug deep to raise more than £400 for charity. Asda in Dudley High Street has chosen Dudley Cancer Support as its charity of the month for August.

Volunteers carried out a two-day bag pack to raise money.

There was also an information stand about the services the charity offers to people affected by cancer in the borough. A total of £404.92 was raised during the event.

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Warning on lethal mixture

A CAMPAIGN is being launched in Stourbridge to warn people of the dangers of mixing cocaine and alcohol.

Dudley's community safety partnership is launching Drop Dead Gorgeous to raise awareness of the potentially lethal substance, cocaethylene.

The campaign features someone who has suffered from the consequences of taking the substances together. The campaign will be rolled out in bars.

Cocaethylene is a chemical formed when alcohol and cocaine are taken together. It is highly toxic and puts the body under immense stress which can cause sudden heart failure. Councillor Tim Wright, cabinet member for community safety, said: "Alcohol and cocaine are a lethal mix."

Tons of rubbish are recycled

A RECYCLING project at Halesowen Leisure Centre has been hailed a success.

Staff and customers have recycled more than 54 tons of rubbish at the centre since the scheme was introduced two years ago.

Why the Staffies are happy

STOURBRIDGE residents have been praised for their support of a dog charity.

Happy Staffie Rescue, based in Kidderminster, opened its second shop in Stourbridge's Market Street last year and has since formed many links with the community. This included a recent donation of £347 from customers at Waitrose in the Ryemarket Shopping Centre.

Waitrose backed the charity, which rescues and rehomes Staffordshire bull terrier and Staffie-cross dogs, through its community matters scheme. The store donates £1,000 a month, with customer voting between three charities.

Mark Hannaford, operations manager at Happy Staffie Rescue, said: "We would like to say a very big thank you to all the staff and customers of Waitrose for thinking of us and to all our wonderful supporters."

"This includes support from people wanting to volunteer in our shop or help us walk the rescue dogs and donating items for us to sell in the shop."

Since the Stourbridge shop opened in July 2010 it has rehomed nine dogs.

Details: www.happystaffierescue.org.uk or call 0845 621 0807.



Pictured with Stella the Staffie are, front, Natasha Newman from Waitrose and Darren Sattler and, back from left, Donna Morgan and Julie Bayliss from the charity with Waitrose duty manager Nigel Smith

Boost for diabetes care

CARE for people with diabetes at Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital has improved after new beds were opened and more specialist nurses recruited, a survey has revealed.

Hospital bosses say patients are also being seen more regularly by specialists and are spending less time on the wards.

The improvements came after a fourth consultant was recruited and extra diabetes specialist nurses were taken on. The number of beds avail-

able for admitted patients with diabetes was increased from eight to 18.

Staff also implemented ThinkGlucose - a scheme which helps staff on wards to be more aware of the importance of managing blood sugar levels in people with diabetes.

Systems

Dr Jane Dale, consultant physician and endocrinologist, said: "We've now got a diabetes team visiting the wards six days a week to check on patients, and we've put new systems in place so

everyone knows what to do if a person with diabetes' blood sugar levels becomes dangerously low.

"We've seen a reduction in the length of time people with diabetes stay in hospital, and, very importantly, we've seen that people who stayed in hospital have also been able to better manage their blood sugar levels after being discharged."

"This means they are less likely to develop complications from diabetes, such as heart disease, foot and eye problems."

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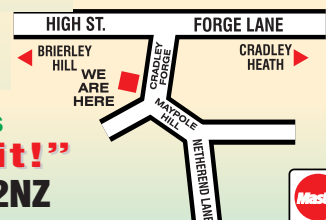


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Doctors' houses sold at auction

SIX former doctors' houses in Stourbridge have been sold at auction raising more than £700,000 for Dudley's hospital trust.

The empty properties in The Holloway were used by medical staff at the old Wordsley Hospital, as well as Russells Hall in Dudley and the Corbett in Stourbridge.

They each sold for between £125,000 and £135,000 when they went under the hammer in an auction organised by the Lex Allan Group.

The money raised from the sale will be re-invested into patient care.

Higher

Two of the houses, which were detached, three-bedroom properties, sold for around £135,000 each – which was higher than the guide price.

The other four semi-detached properties fetched around £125,000 each.

Lex Allen's sales director Stewart Alcock said: "We were pleased they all sold."

He said the houses would be modernised.

Earlier this year, the hospital trust sold off 12 former doctor houses in Ashdown Drive, raking in almost £1million.

The properties had been the target of vandals since medics moved away around five years ago.

The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust chief executive Paula Clark said: "The trust is pleased with the sale."

Lynn serves up treats at park



Lynn Jones and catering assistant Meena Kumari with the cakes on offer at the tea room

A VICTORIAN team room is being supplied with up to date goodies by a Halesowen woman.

The tea room at Wolverhampton's West Park has been lovingly restored to give visitors a taste of the past.

But the cakes on offer are very fresh creations of Lynn Jones, who has taken it over.

The tearoom was opened in 1901 and restored in 2005 with the help of a £2.8million lottery grant.

The tiles on the floor and walls are mostly original. Those that could not be used were replaced by exact copies. Even the look of the radiators is unaltered.

Pictures of the park in earlier times on loan from the Wolverhampton Photographic Society add to the nostalgic

atmosphere. But the Victoria sponge – naturally – cherry shortbread, coffee and walnut cake, flapjack and other goodies on offer are all prepared by Mrs Jones at her Halesowen home.

Mrs Jones, who bid successfully to take control of the tea room after its revamp and has worked in catering for 35 years, said: "I spend a couple of hours a day baking four big cakes but it is a labour of love, just like running the tea room."

Important

"As soon as I walked in I knew that it was the place for me. I immediately understood how important it would be to keep the tradition of the Victorian age while introducing a little of the modern."

Floral displays in the park and Sunday afternoon bandstand concerts add to the enjoyment in the summer.

Ray Phillips, 79 of Birmingham New Road, Lanesfield, a regular visitor with wife Betty, said: "The park and the tea room are a godsend to us. You need a decent cuppa after a pleasant walk."

Retired builder Roger Darbey, aged 68, of Coniston Road, Palmers Green, visiting the tea room with wife Dorothy, said: "We love the way the character of the place has been retained."

And Jean Thomas, 76, of Aldersley Road, Tettenhall, said: "The tea room was open when I was a child but it was wartime and there was nothing on the shelves. How times have changed!"

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Crunch date is set for homes scheme

PLANS to knock down a business park and build more than 200 homes near the River Stour in Stourbridge will go before council planners in October.

Working industrial units at Sunrise Business Park in Wollaston High Street and nearby land off Lowndes Road and Bradley Road would be replaced by up to 215 two and three-storey houses.

Councillor Colin Wilson, chairman of Dudley Council's planning committee, said councillors were expected to meet on October 31.

The controversial plans have sparked concerns from nearby businesses who have claimed the development would be a "recipe for disaster", labelling the proposals "woefully inadequate".

Assessment

The land borders both the River Stour and Stourbridge Canal – which has seen two major floods in recent years.

A flood risk assessment reveals 30 per cent of the site is at a high risk, with more than one per cent chance of flooding, while 65 per cent is medium risk.

David Millward, director of Evans & White Manufacturing Ltd in Bradley Road, said waters had reached more than 2ft deep in his workshop. "The area where they want to build houses – where they want to put families and children – is basically one big flood plain," he said. Site owners Revelan Plc were unavailable for comment.

Tickets on sale for comic Jimmy Carr

TICKETS are on sale for comedian Jimmy Carr's rearranged show in Dudley.

The star was originally due to perform at the town's concert hall earlier this year but asked to move the date until September 22 instead.

Tickets are £25. For more details call 01384 815577.

Carole is named top trainee



Mansell Trainee of the Year, Carole Millward

A DUDLEY woman has been named top trainee at construction company Mansell after nearly a decade with the business.

Nine years ago Carole Millward joined the Stourbridge-based Western region of Mansell Construction as an administrator in the estimating department.

Now she has been named as Mansell Trainee of the Year.

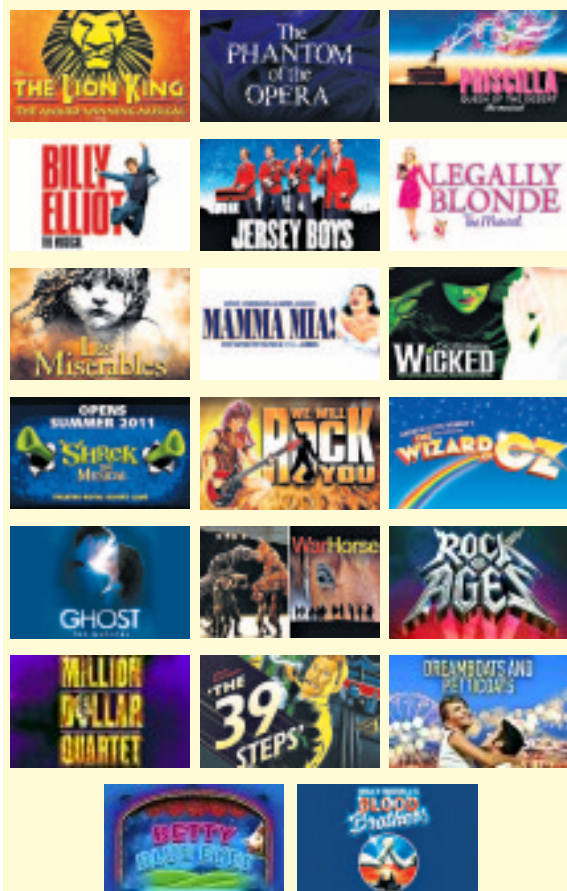
Carole was given the award after joining Mansell's technical trainee programme as a trainee estimator. She has completed her BTEC National Certificate in construction

and is now in the first year of study for the HNC in construction at Walsall College.

She said, "I really enjoy learning new things and I would encourage anyone who has the opportunity to embrace the training offered to them."

Mansell regional managing director, Steve Davies, said "We are really proud of Carole's achievement."

"She is proof that, given determination, anyone, wherever they are in the company or at any stage of their career can reach their potential and enhance their opportunities."



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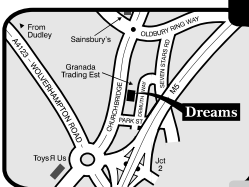
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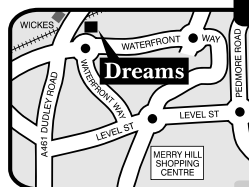
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Charity searches for volunteers

A DUDLEY charity is looking for volunteers to work with vulnerable people. The Dudley Advocacy voluntary project is recruiting people to help the needy with day-to-day activities and act as confidantes to help them with a number of tasks.

Helpers will be required to make phone calls, pursue complaints and also chat to vulnerable and disabled people. Full training is given and no experience is necessary. For more information or to get involved, people can call Karen Jones on 01384 456877.

Where Yugo, Ian goes – even out to Serbia

A CLASSIC car club in the Black Country set up to preserve a rare Communist vehicle could be linking up with fellow enthusiasts in Serbia.

Vehicle inspector Ian Macaulay, from Brierley Hill, has a passion for the quirky Yugoslavian produced Zastava-Yugo.

The 53-year-old has since been contacted by a host of people across the country and even by

enthusiasts living where the car was made.

"It shows that we are recognised as a proper club with many existing members interested in preserving the Yugo," he said.

UK club members now plan to drive their Yugos to the factory where they were built in Serbia.

Anyone wishing to find out more about the club can call 07732 054569.

Pub reopening date is delayed

RE-OPENING of a landmark Black Country pub has been delayed after bosses went back to the drawing boards on plans to refurbish the empty site.

The Thorns Pub in Quarry Bank was expected to open its doors late last month as Marston's Brewery was eager to have the building up and running again.

But the brewery said the refurbishment scheme had taken slightly longer than planned to finalise and work was now not expected to begin until next month.

The revamp for the pub in Thorns Road will include an al fresco dining area.

An opening date has not yet been confirmed by the brewery but a schedule is expected to be released shortly after the work is completed later on in the year.

The pub's carvery, which was well-known across the Black Country, will also return once the pub re-opens after its interior refurbishment is completed.

Empty

A new licensee to take over the day-to-day running of the pub has not been officially confirmed.

A spokesman for Marston's said: "We are currently in the process of tweaking the plans for the refurbishment of the Thorns pub."

"However this process has taken slightly longer than we initially planned."

"We are now hoping to be on site in September to commence the planned works."

The pub has stood empty since January after the brewery reclaimed it from previous licensee Paul Skitt, who had run the site since 2002.

It shut its doors due to declining trade and spiralling costs which Mr Skitt said had made it impossible to continue.

Before its closure, The Thorns was one of the area's best-known pubs notable for an eye-catching mural of rock stars painted on an outside wall.

The brewery previously said interest in taking over the pub had been high and a recruitment process was ongoing to find a suitable tenant for the pub.

At its height, the pub was also well-known for its music nights and won a series of awards.

Crop fire may cost £15,000

MORE THAN £12,000 of damage was caused when flames tore through a cornfield and part of a nearby wood.

A 30-acre section of the field, off Caunsall Road, Caunsall, near Kidderminster, was engulfed by fire on Sunday and started to spread to the woods beyond.

Stourton farmers RD Needs and Sons, which lease the field, are counting the costs of the blaze. They estimate the fire will cost between £12,000 and £15,000 in lost crops and repairs.

Robin Needs, aged 59, said: "It is a year's work which has literally gone up in smoke. "Not only is it the loss of the crops but also repairs to the hedges and fences."

CONTRACTORS finished work at a Halesowen country park – and then installed play equipment for children.

The toddlers' play area at Waseley Hills Country Park, near Romsley, in Halesowen, has had the revamp courtesy of National Grid.

Recently refurbishments to overhead power cables and pylons which feed Birmingham have been carried out by the power company. On completion of the work, National Grid carried made a donation to the Countryside Service as compensation for the disruption

This money was used to pay for the new kit in the toddlers' play area.

Corking results for vineyard



Martin Vickers of Halfpenny Green Vineyard in Bobbington is celebrating winning five national wine awards with marketing officer Jennifer Sheriff

A POPULAR Midland vineyard is cracking open its award-winning bubbly to toast a handsome haul from a national contest.

Halfpenny Green Vineyards in Bobbington, South Staffordshire, scooped five awards at the 2011 English and Welsh Wine of the Year competition.

It was awarded silvers for its white English sparkling wine, the Halfpenny Green Sparkling, and single variety Schönburger Long Acre.

Bronzes were presented for the 2006 Halfpenny Green Pink Sparkling, single variety Huxelrebe called Tom Hill and medium-dry

Penny Black. Sales and marketing officer Jennifer Sheriff said: "We are all delighted and hope the wines produced this year will help us to awards next year."

She added: "We are pleased with the publicity English wines are getting and the way the industry is growing in this country."

"English wines are winning a lot of awards and were even served at the Royal Wedding."

The vineyard, in Tom Lane, is set in 26 acres.

It includes tea rooms and a craft centre.

Cliff railway is sold off

BRIDGNORTH'S cliff railway has been sold to property developers for between £700,000 and £800,000. Allan and Jean Reynolds have sold the Bridgnorth Castle Hill Railway Company to the Suffolk-based Tipping family.

Car boot chaos blocks the road

POLICE were forced to stop bargain hunters entering a car boot sale near Dudley after it attracted hundreds more people than normal, leading to traffic chaos on surrounding roads.

Hundreds of cars queued to get into the field in Himley, off the busy A449 Stourbridge Road, causing lengthy tailbacks. Organisers said more people had flocked to the site than normal on Sunday because another car boot sale nearby did not take place.

Police were forced to divert traffic away from Col's Car Boot Sale on the B4176 Himley Bypass for around two hours. Bosses said they were taking steps to avoid a repeat this Sunday by opening an overspill car park on an adjacent field.

Gavin Williamson, MP for South Staffordshire, said: "We need to get officials together because this is a recurring problem with car boot sales. People are becoming prisoners in their own homes."

Car boot sale organiser Colin Turley said: "It was just volume of traffic. We have another field now where we can put an overspill car park."

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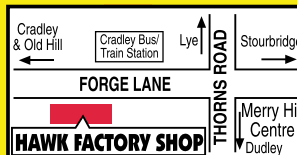
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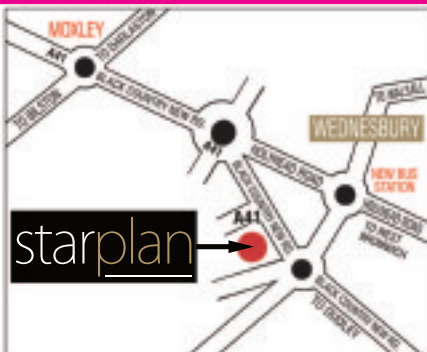
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Traders fear changes on parking

TRADERS say they will be forced out of business if plans for parking bans outside their Black Country shops are given the go-ahead.

More than 600 people have signed a petition in a bid to challenge Dudley Council's proposals to install double yellow lines outside shops in Howley Grange Lane, Halesowen.

Around 70 roads in the town could be given parking bans or restrictions as part of a scheme devised by council transport bosses.

Officials say the proposals were drawn up in response to complaints

about parking in the streets and say the plans will ease congestion.

Plans would mean double yellow lines starting from Howley Grange Lane at the junction with Frankley Avenue. Lines would be painted along one side of the road before extending into Spies Lane and Shenstone Valley Road. A parking bay is proposed along the opposite side of the road.

Chip shop owner Kulvinder Khela, aged 40, has helped organise the petition. "Times are so tough to run a business at the moment and we do not need this as well," he said.

Friends Susan Shipley and Lynn Hawthorne, 51 and 47 respectively, opened their florist shop in the street four years ago.

But now the pair say they would consider selling up unless the council goes back to the drawing board.

Resident Ian Cooper, 45, who is a member of the Halesowen Labour group, added: "Hundreds of signatures were collected within just a couple of weeks which shows the strength of feeling for people around here."

Transport bosses say there is room for revisions to the plans.

Three are forced to flee as yobs set their store alight

THIEVES raided a Black Country store and stole a till before setting the building alight - forcing three men to flee from an upstairs flat.

Yobs forced open a metal shutter at the side of the Raja Supermarket and burst into the main shop. They wrenched a till from the counter and vandalised the shop in Church Street, Pensnett, near Brierley Hill.

Care gets a £10m increase

HOSPITAL bosses in Dudley will spend more than £10.5million on new medical equipment to help improve patient care over the next three years.

Some of the cash will be used to replace old and worn out instruments.

The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, which runs Russells Hall and the Guest hospitals in Dudley and Corbett in Stourbridge, will invest £2.5m in 2011/12 and the same amount in 2012/13 and 2013/14.

Staff are being asked for their views on what new equipment is needed.

A further £2.2m will be spent on new imaging equipment used to carry out body scans. A further £502,000 will be paid out in 2012/13 and £365,000 in 2013/14.

The proposals are outlined in the trust's forward plan, which it has submitted to independent regulator Monitor.

The report says: "The trust needs to ensure that it has imaging equipment that incorporates the latest technology. Over the next three years, 10 pieces of imaging equipment will be replaced."

Stabbing threat to police

A LOFT insulator who threatened to stab police officers and brandished a 12-inch kitchen knife in the street following a drink and drugs binge has narrowly escaped a prison sentence.

Jody Nock, aged 30, of Star Street, Lye, admitted possession of an offensive weapon in public after his mother called police, telling them he was screaming and shouting and had a knife.

Judge Michael Challinor, sitting at Wolverhampton Crown Court, told Nock he had started the hearing with plans for a custodial sentence but had been persuaded against the idea.

He sentenced him to nine months' jail, suspended for 18 months, along with 180 hours of unpaid work.

Police had arrived and spotted Nock in a phone box with the knife, the court heard. He was arrested and proceeded to be "uncooperative and abusive" to officers, threatening to stab them.

The shaken shop owner, his father and his brother were asleep upstairs when a smoke alarm sounded in the premises at around 3.10am on August 14.

They were able to escape through a back door moments before thick black smoke and flames overwhelmed the front of the building.

It took four fire crews to bring the blaze under control with some remaining at the scene for four hours to damp down the wrecked shop.

Owner Raja Khan has been left counting the cost of the damage to the business which had only been open for a month.

Front windows were smashed with fire and smoke damage to the main shop floor.

Dumped

Mr Khan's father, who refused to give his name, said: "We were lucky to be able to get out in time through the back door."

"Someone said they found the till dumped further down the road."

"We can't believe it as we've only just opened up the business."

Smashed glass and debris littered the street outside in the aftermath of the fire.

Some stock was salvaged but Mr Khan would not speculate on the cost of the damage.

Resident John Dummelow, of Queens Street, was awoken by the family and came outside to see what had happened.

"There was such thick black smoke blowing into our back garden," he said. "It's made such a mess."

Firefighter Lee Wilson, from Brierley Hill fire station, said investigations were being made into what started the fire.

Town team on target to help a charity



Chris Barron, manager of The White House in Dudley, thanks Dudley Town FC chairman Stephen Austin for pledging to support the charity in the coming season

A BLACK COUNTRY football team has pledged to support a local cancer charity during the coming season - and has already raised more than £700.

Dudley Town FC has made The White House Cancer Support in its their nominated charity for the 2011/12 season. A match between ex-West Bromwich Albion players and Dudley Town's over-35s generated £726. Ex-Baggies favourites including Ian Hamilton and Daryl Burgess and veteran Walsall full-back Mick Evans helped the Albion veterans win 4-3.

The club will hold fund-raising events throughout the year for the charity, based in Ednam Road.

Dudley Town Chairman Stephen Austin said: "I know that this will be just the start of a close working relationship with The White House, which will be mutually beneficial." White House manager Chris Barron said: "We are looking forward to working with Dudley Town FC."

Fire stations to shut despite consultation

PLANS to close Halesowen and Cradley Heath fire stations will go ahead despite a consultation process.

FBU bosses say West Midlands Fire Service has admitted that reversing the decision to close the two stations is not up for discussion at the two public consultation meetings next month.

The fire service wants to merge the stations and create a new single base. The move would mean the loss of one of the 24-hour fire crews in the area.

The union says that at least 28 frontline firefighter posts could be affected.

In a March statement, West Midlands Fire Service said a review would be carried out "to identify all potential solutions" and the public would be consulted.

But the FBU reckons the decision has already been taken to axe the stations in

Mace Street, Cradley Heath, and Hagley Road, Halesowen.

FBU West Midlands regional secretary Chris Downes said: "Lives will be put at risk because how can you deal with one incident going on in Halesowen and then cover an emergency in Cradley Heath?"

Fire Service spokeswoman Lindsey Preece said: "The decision to merge the stations was taken by the fire authority back in 2009 after a period of consultation."

"This public consultation is being carried out to discuss the proposal to have one vehicle based at the new location instead of two."

Public meetings will take place on September 1 at Lutley Community Centre, in Brookwillow Road, Halesowen, and on September 2 at Reddal Hill Primary School, in Trinity Street, Old Hill.

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Trapped cats spark crush cans appeal

A BIZARRE spate of cats getting their heads stuck in food tins has broken out in Netherton and prompted calls for householders to crush cans before putting them out for recycling.

A local councillor says he is beginning to fear there may be a more sinister reason for the incidents. He has heard of four cases of cats with heads stuck in cans in the Saltwells and Bowling Green Road area.

Theatre groups appeal

FOUR theatre companies in Dudley are looking for new talent to join them.

The groups are hoping to recruit new members for September.

The Junior Buzz Youth Theatre is for seven to 11-year-olds and meets on Thursdays from 4.30 to 6pm.

A newly started group, The Senior Buzz Youth Theatre, is for those aged 11 to 15 and will meet at the same time on Thursdays.

The Buzz Theatre Company also meets on Thursdays from 6 to 9pm and is for those aged 15 years and above.

The NAC Theatre group has been running since 2004 and meets each Wednesday from 7 to 9pm and is for those aged from 12 to adults.

All four groups resume week commencing September 12 and meet at The Earls High School, Furnace Lane, Halesowen. Details: Call Sheila Chamberlain-Hyett or Rachel Sharpe on 01384 813904.

Purrs without price



Knitters Joan Morris and Gwen White, front, with, back, from left, Lillian Foster, manager Lisa Geddes, recreational and leisure organisers Matthew Pound and Jill Haden, and Aileen Lunn at Broadway Halls Care Home

A KNITTING group is making its first donation of baby clothing to Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital. The tiny cardigans, hats and blankets are for premature babies in the neo-natal unit. The clothes have been made by residents and staff at Broadway Halls Care Home, Dudley.

Families have also chipped in and given time to help make some of the clothes. In total around 30 cardigans, 50 hats and 25 blankets have been created for the hospital.

Jill Haden, activities co-ordinator at the care home in The Broadway, said some of the women began knitting scarves before moving onto baby clothes two months ago.

Advising

"But it has been happening so often that I am beginning to smell a rat and suspect that someone might be doing this deliberately."

"Whatever the reason, I think it is worth advising people to squash their tins before putting them out for recycling."

RSPCA region spokeswoman Judith Haw said: "This is a common problem. We do appeal to people putting cans out for recycling to wash them first or crush them so that animals, including cats, cannot get their heads stuck."

Veterinary nurse Diane Westwood, a volunteer with the Saltwells Nature Reserve Support Group in Netherton, said: "If someone is deliberately doing this to cats then it is very cruel."

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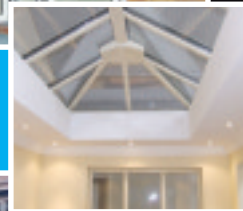
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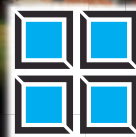


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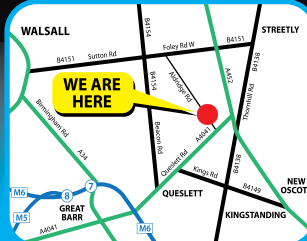
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Industrious Anna is pressing ahead



Anna Stevenson, founder and boss at Millennium Pressed Metal in Dudley

A DUDLEY company is proving to be one of the most striking recent success stories of a woman succeeding in engineering.

Specialist component provider Millennium Pressed Metal is the brainchild of Anna Stevenson, who came up with the idea of starting the business after completing a feasibility study as part of her A-level studies at Edgely School.

At just 21, the female entrepreneur took the results from her course and, with the financial backing of her mother and stepfather, launched the company in a small unit in Tipton.

That was in 2003 and in the following eight years she has dealt with a major downturn in manufacturing, incessant competition from the Far East and arguably the worst global downturn in decades. Escalating material and energy costs formed another major hurdle.

Anna said: "In the early days I was quickly dismissed by potential customers as a young girl out of her depth – and that was before I'd even discussed how we could solve their capacity issues or provide rapid turnaround for their press work."

"This attitude tended to change when

they were in trouble and then came knocking to see if we could help get them out of the proverbial. As soon as we delivered, the stereotypes went out of the window."

Millennium Pressed Metal in 2011 is a very different animal to the start-up firm of eight years ago. Today the company records annual sales of more than £1.8m and has diversified at its Castle Works site to provide low and high volume production, long-term supply, prototyping and limited life components.

Commercial

It now has clients in the auto, commercial vehicle, construction, electrical, storage and white goods arenas.

"It's been a rollercoaster ride over the last eight years but I think we have earned the right to be an established and respected part of the West Midlands' manufacturing community," added Anna.

"Our workforce has been incredible and out of the current 23 staff, nearly 50 per cent are women."

"This hasn't been a conscious design of mine; I've just picked the best engineers and shopfloor operatives that have come through the door."

Grocer fined for blocking the pavement

AGREENGROCER has been hit with a £3,200 court bill for blocking pavements with displays of stock – but insists he was "just trying to make a living".

The owner of the Big Apple Fruit Company says he would have gone out of business if Dudley magistrates had not slashed his fine from a possible maximum of £7,000.

Report by Adam Burling

Shelves and crates had obstructed the pavements outside the shops in Stourbridge High Street and Hagley Street, Halesowen, sparking complaints from the public, the court heard.

Pedestrians were even forced to walk in the road in front of oncoming traffic in Stourbridge.

Magistrates reduced the fine and gave managing director Anthony Robinson four months to pay – instead

of 28 days – as they said they did not want yet another high street store to close.

There had been "numerous" complaints from the public in both towns, said Miss Neelam Bhangar, prosecuting on behalf of Dudley Council.

The authority wrote to the firm six times in the space of a month asking for the display to be moved but it never was.

In the end Robinson was summoned to court facing seven charges of obstructing the highway, which he admitted.

Tough

He told the court his firm, which also has outlets in Walsall and Harborne, had been struggling recently.

The business was being propped up by loans and Robinson has only been able to pay himself £5,000 in wages over the last year.

He said: "We have seen a lot of shops shut down on the high street because everyone is finding it tough."

"We are just trying to make a living."

Robinson was fined £250 for each offence and ordered to pay £1,430 costs and a £15 victim surcharge.

Chairman of magistrates Mr Len Ridney said the court accepted Robinson's financial difficulties.

Families fighting £500 school bills

FAMILIES across Dudley are uniting to fight plans to charge £500 a year for disabled pupils' school travel under council cuts.

Parents said they have "no idea" how they will cope when the new system is introduced.

From September, students between 16 and 19 who need to get a taxi or specialist vehicle will have to pay the first £500 of costs. Their families are starting a petition and want to get answers from Dudley Council chiefs in person.

Mother-of-two Lynne Higgins, aged 40, is appealing for anyone affected to contact her and join the campaign.

She needs to find the cash for her son, Joseph,

15, to get to and from Old Park School in Russells Hall, Dudley.

Joseph – who has learning difficulties, Tourette's, epilepsy and speech problems – currently gets a bus with transport funded by the school. But from September the responsibility for school transport of the disabled will lie with Dudley Council.

Mrs Higgins, of Windsor Crescent, Dudley, already works 18 hours at weekends as a carer for the elderly to boost the family's income.

Suddenly

She looks after her seven-year-old son Peter during the week while her husband Stephen works as a BT engineer.

Mrs Higgins says she will have to drive Joseph to school as she cannot afford the new fees – but

she also has to take Peter to St Joseph's Catholic Primary in Kates Hill, Dudley.

She said: "I have no idea how on earth we are suddenly expected to pay £500 a year."

"They are cutting services and it seems the most vulnerable are always the hardest hit," she added.

The charges will affect 27 pupils in total. Low income families will have to pay a reduced rate of £300.

Councillor Liz Walker, cabinet member for children's services, said: "The charges only make up a contribution towards the cost of providing the transport. This contribution will ensure that, in the long term, the service can be maintained."

To get involved in the campaign call Mrs Higgins on 0783 400 4585.



Joseph Kirkham-Higgins, aged 15, with his mother, Lynne, and other families

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Chance to buy extra bins for green waste

EXTRA green bins and bags for people in Dudley who need to get rid of more garden rubbish are going on sale.

For £25, residents will be able to buy either a second green bin or two heavy-duty reusable bags, depending on collections in the area.

Award for leisure centre

A BLACK COUNTRY town's leisure centre has scooped a national award for making its facilities easy to access.

Halesowen Leisure Centre scooped the "access performance" gong at the Annual National Benchmarking Awards.

It was judged against other similar-sized centres from across the UK.

The centre was recognised for its community work through events including women-only swimming classes and fitness sessions for over-50s.

Councillor David Stanley, cabinet member for environment and culture, said: "I would like to congratulate the staff at the centre on their hard work which has culminated in winning this award."

"There is something for everyone at our leisure centres."

"I hope more residents will take the opportunity to visit to find out more about the fantastic classes and facilities we provide," he added.

Each house will be limited to one order. Households will then have to pay an annual fee of £60 for the extra rubbish to be picked up. Collections are due to start next month.

Environmental services boss Councillor David Stanley said money generated by the optional new service would be ploughed back into wages and paying for vehicle maintenance.

"This is an extremely cost-effective and effortless way in which to dispose of additional green waste and I hope many people utilise this service," he said.

System

"We know that some households will definitely benefit from being able to purchase an additional green bin or bag."

He said people moving home would be able to take the bins or bags and transfer the extra collections.

The scheme will begin on September 1.

Last year, Dudley Council introduced a controversial new system for bin collections in a drive to save £250,000. The move limited the number of bins binmen were allowed to collect to just three, sparking more than 1,000 complaints in a week.

For more information or to order, call 0300 555 2345 or visit www.dudley.gov.uk/recycling

Stand by your shovels – volunteers fight back



Front right, organiser Jemma Grice with youngsters who have volunteered to help clean up the litter-blighted Millennium Point gardens in Dudley

CAMPAIGNERS are waging war on drug dealers and yobs vandalising community gardens in Dudley.

Broken glass bottles and litter are among the problems blighting the Millennium Point garden, off Hillside, in Wrens Nest. Parents say their children want areas to play games and sports and want the gardens tidied up to stop youngsters hanging around in the streets.

Some have taken matters into their own hands and have held a community clean-up day.

But they are appealing for more volunteers to join and help provide gardening equipment to aid the transformation of the garden built a decade ago.

The volunteers need strimmers, shovels and litter pickers to help continue with their efforts.

They have asked anyone who could help them to come forward and get in touch.

Anyone who can help with equipment is asked to call 07792059737.

thechronicle

GAMES

thechronicle

GAMES

Youngsters kept busy by Smurfs and Pokemon

NDS

LOOKING for a game to keep the young ones occupied, maybe on a long road trip?

There's no need to look any further than these two top Nintendo DS summer titles for children.

Ubisoft's *The Smurfs* (3) is one of a blue wave of new games on several formats featuring the cute elf folk.

Based on the new movie about Smurfs lost in New York, it features a read-along adventure game where the reader decides the outcome, a series of challenges to win virtual figurines of the Smurf characters and lots of Smurf-related mini-games to keep the kids busy.

Released in the early spring, *Pokemon White Version* and *Black Version* (both 3) have been hanging around at the top of the DS chart ever since.

A fresh batch of 'pocket monsters' means that collectors will be in poke-paradise with more than 150 new Pokemon to capture, bringing the total tally up to 649.

The graphics have been upgraded, there is a dynamic new world to explore and new areas to unlock with plenty of opportunities to engage in monster battle.

The essential characteristic of both games (which each have a different batch of Pokemon) remains the ability to trade, battle and play with other Pokemon owners via infrared connectivity and by going online.

Pokemon designer and composer Junichi Masuda has done a good job of blending traditional Pokemon appeal with fresh elements in both varieties of the new Pokemon. **LB**

Xbox 360

XBOX Live's current Summer of Arcade season has released its star game with *Insanely Twisted Shadow Planet* (7+, 1200 MS points), a colourful alien cousin to last year's XBLA hit *Limbo*.

Ingenious puzzles will satisfy the cerebral gamer whilst they enjoy the cartoon style and retro feel of a game that, on first encounter, looks like an old school 2D side-scrolling shooter as you guide a flying saucer through caverns.

Meanwhile, virtual pinball fans are recommended to check out *Williams Pinball Classics* in which 13 classic tables from the American Williams company are lovingly recreated in video game form.

The physics work brilliantly with smooth ball movement and you can pan and zoom around the tables in your own arcade. However, you can only play the top table once you've proved your ability on the others.

It's very addictive, particularly for anyone who has ever hankered after their own coin-op pinball table, and all those buzzers and bells are likely to coax a wave of nostalgia from older gamers.

Tables themed on hit movie themes are missing, probably due to licensing issues, but there is a good selection available, including *Funhouse*, *Space Shuttle*, *Sorcerer* and *No Good Gofers*. Now there's no need for an endless supply of coins before you become a pinball wizard. **LB**



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Included excursions:

- North Yorkshire Moors and Whitby
- York
- Bridlington & Beverley

5 Days • 4 Nights:

12 September from £199.95

4 Days • 3 Nights including excursions:

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We take you firstly to beautiful Hereford. Here you can discover the fine architecture and the magnificent cathedral. Dinner, bed and breakfast accommodation is included tonight. On day 2 we take you to Llangollen. Here we have included a cruise along the canal taking you on the famous aqueduct which is over 126 feet high.

2 Days • 1 Night: 03 September from £79.95

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Southport - set next to a great beach - 19 September

Brean Sands - breathtaking West Country seaside resort location - 05 September

Prestatyn - set between the rolling hills of Wales and miles of award winning beaches - 19 September

Camber Sands - set next to a long sandy beach near Rye - 29 August, 12 September & 24 October

5 Days • 4 Nights: Adults from £99.95 • Kids from £69.95

Eastbourne • Glastonbury Hotel

Enjoy 5 days at the popular resort famous for its flower decked promenade and gardens, beaches and excellent facilities. The Glastonbury Hotel is located on the Royal Parade.

Included excursions:

- Brighton
- Hastings & the old Cinque Port of Rye

5 Days • 4 Nights: 12 September from £179.95

Scottish Majesty Loch Ness & the Isle of Skye

Based at the town of Dingwall, close to the Cromarty Firth this is a great way to see some of Scotland's spectacular scenery. The National Hotel is set in the heart of town.

Included excursions:

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Girls Getaway Weekend Copthorne Hotel, Cardiff

Treat yourself to a luxurious weekend away. Shop in central Cardiff before checking in to the 4* Copthorne Hotel. There is a health and leisure centre with a swimming pool, gym, sauna and whirlpool bath. Dinner is included. On day 2 the hotel have included a half hour beauty treatment. Return via the charming Cotswolds.

2 Days • 1 Night: 17 September from £99.95

Isle of Wight • Shanklin

Shanklin boasts a long sandy beach which lies at the foot of spectacular cliffs. We stay at the Langham Court Hotel. This is set minutes from the sea front.

Included excursions:

- Half day visit to Godshill
- Full day tour of the Island's coastline

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The Corner House is set in the glorious resort of Sandown within walking distance of the beach, pier and shops.

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The glorious resort of Weymouth is set on a breathtaking Georgian Bay surrounded by rolling hills. The Russell Hotel is positioned on the sea front close to the shops etc.

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- Poole & Sandbanks

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Enjoy a weekend break taking in fashionable, bustling London and a chance to catch a breath of sea air at Brighton. Stay at the Europa Hotel. Features include a leisure club with heated indoor pool, spa and sauna.

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31 October - 5 Days • 4 Nights - from £179.95

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31 October - 5 Days • 4 Nights - from £149.95

Folkestone • Grand Burstin Hotel

04 November - 3 Days • 2 Nights - from £99.95

Newquay Turkey & Tinsel Special Edgcombe Hotel

07 November - 5 Days • 4 Nights - from £199.95

Newquay • 3* Esplanade Hotel

07 November - 5 Days • 4 Nights - from £199.95

Pontins Turkey & Tinsel Special - Southport

07 November - 5 Days • 4 Nights - from £99.95

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Blackpool Christmas Cabaret Weekend La Tour Hotel

19 November - 2 Days • 1 Night - from £49.95

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21 November - 5 Days • 4 Nights - from £179.95

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21 November - 4 Days • 3 Nights - from £229.95

Ludlow Mediaeval Fair & Chester

26 November - 2 Days • 1 Night - from £89.95

Bath Christmas Shopper & visit to Clarke's Shopping Village

05 November & 3 December - 2 Days • 1 Night from £79.95

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11 November from £99.95

4 Days • 3 Nights - with included excursions:

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- Paris by night and Montparnasse Tower
- Versailles. (admission to Chateau extra)

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- Dolomites - £22.95 pp
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- Alpine spa town and Merano - £22.95 pp

Special Offer: Book all 3 excursions for just £59.95

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5 Days • 4 Nights - 05 December from £199.95

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6 Days • 5 Nights - 03 December from £299.95

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7 Days • 6 Nights - 03 December from £299.95

Black Forest Christmas Market with Free Bar

4 Days • 3 Nights - 09 December from £189.95

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3 Days • 2 Nights - 09 December from £139.95

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3 Days • 2 Nights - 25 November from £139.95

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Disney's Hotel Santa Fe

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Disney's Hotel Santa Fe

thechronicle

Hearing on pay equality

TWO CASES involving the equal pay claims of 950 workers at Dudley Council are set to be considered by an employment tribunal next month, it has been announced.

More than 2,000 members of staff at the authority have already accepted new wage offers to settle a long-running pay row. The move was part of equal pay offers to bring the wages of women in line with those of men.

But workers unhappy with what they have been given are now set to take their case before the court.

Councillor Tim Wright, cabinet member for human resources, law and governance, said the hearings are scheduled for three weeks, starting on September 12.

They will be held at the Birmingham Employment Tribunal Centre.

The authority settled with 1,937 people at a cost of £9.4million last year.

Another 1,300 offers worth over £10.4m were made to workers in December. Around 600 of those accepted at a cost of around £5.2m.

College open evenings to help pick that new course

HALESOWEN COLLEGE is hosting two new higher education open evenings for those looking for a new career or to expand their learning.

The events are at the college's Coombs Wood campus on September 6 and 14, and advice will be given on courses including health and social care, early years, learning support, computing, counselling, business and media production, salon management, marketing and teaching.

Adults can sign up for a course and plan their learning around their work and family. The evenings are from 5.30pm to 8pm at the college at Coombs Wood Business Centre, Coombs Wood Business Park, Coombs Road, Halesowen.

Town will put up extra care housing for elderly

A MULTI-MILLION pound extra care housing scheme will be built in Stourbridge to accommodate the town's ageing population.

Council leaders revealed that the development has been pinpointed as a "necessity" for the town's future and said the scheme would form part of ambitious long-term plans for the area.

Dudley Council leader Councillor Les Jones said the new "village"-style housing was part of plans to help elderly people stay independent for longer.

Work has already been completed on a £16million scheme in Russells Hall, which will have 132 apartments, while an £8m project in Coseley is due to open later this year.

Money saved by closing outdated care homes in the borough – including Shenstone in Halesowen – would be ploughed into helping fund similar schemes.

"We do have an ageing population and we have to accommodate that, as well as meeting demands to allow for more independent living," said Councillor Jones.

"This has come from feedback from previous public consultations over what is needed in the town."

Stage secrets to be revealed

SECRETS of stage management, directing, lighting and sound will all be revealed at a behind the scenes workshop in Kinvor next month.

Anyone interested in drama can head to the Both Sides Now session organised by the New Kinvor Players theatre group at the Edward Marsh Centre in Legion Drive on September 5. Director Mike Kaiser will lead the event. Admission is free.

Scattered

The plans have come to light in the latest draft copy of the Stourbridge Area Action Plan.

They could see either one huge development similar to the two which have already been completed or a scattered development across a number of sites within a certain area.

There are no details yet on the number of properties that would be involved.

"No discussions have taken place with particular developers at this stage but these schemes will be appearing across Dudley, so we included it in the plans," added Councillor Jones.

A public consultation on the document is due to finish on August 29, with the full results and final report to be released in February.

The Brierley Hill Area Action Plan was approved earlier this year.

Consultation on the draft of the Halesowen Area Action Plan is due to be completed in October.

Back to school for charity

GROWN-UPS can don their old uniform and revisit their school days at a Back to Skool disco to raise cash for Mary Stevens Hospice.

Sounds of the 60s, provided by Pegasus Entertainment, will flood the dancefloor at Dudley Kingswinford Rugby Club on September 16, under the watchful eye of 'headmaster' Tony McGee.

A tuck shop offering a range of penny sweets and snacks will be open and a traditional dinner lady will serve pink sponge and ice cream.

Guests can take their own refreshments but alcohol will only be on offer from the club bar. A head boy and head girl will be chosen for the best outfit.

Janet Jones, head of fundraising said: "We always try to offer something different with our events to appeal to all ages."

"This should be a great night out, so people should bring their friends along, dress up in their gym slips and short trousers and wear their old school tie with pride."

Tickets are £8, available on 01384 377778 or online at: www.marystevenshospice.co.uk



'Headmaster' Tony McGee and his daughter, Hayley McGee, get out their costumes for the Mary Stevens Hospice Back to Skool disco

New bid on homes at former gas site

A FRESH bid to turn Dudley's landmark former gasworks site into a major housing development has been lodged with time is running out on planning permission.

It was granted for at least 162 properties at Constitution Hill three years ago.

National Grid Property Holdings Ltd has now submitted an application to Dudley Council to renew outline planning consent for the scheme, which is due to expire this month. Bosses want to extend the time limit for full proposals while they negotiate the sale of the site.

Education

Plans to build the new homes were first mooted back in 2006. However, the scheme was thrown out by Dudley planning chiefs the following year. They thought that the land should be used for employment purposes.

They also voiced concerns that no financial agreement had been made about how much money the company would contribute to improve nearby highways, education provision and access by foot to the development.

National Grid appealed the decision to the Planning Inspectorate and won permission in 2008.

Bosses have now applied to Dudley Council to renew the planning permission for the site and are also requesting that a requirement that some affordable housing is built on the land is scrapped.

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The stage is set for a Grand season of top entertainment

THE GRAND Theatre's autumn season offers musicals, comedy, powerful drama and even a little risqué entertainment.

Highlights will include a star-studded Calendar Girls with some familiar actresses getting Grand exposure, the stage version of hit children's book Mr Stink by Little Britain's David Williams and lots of 1960s nostalgia in Keeler, Dreamboats And Petticoats and The Sensational 60s Experience.

The new season gets under way on September 10 with the return of that down-to-earth diva from Yorkshire and former Loose Women presenter Jane McDonald in concert for one-night only. Expect plenty of glamour and giggles.

Comedy

There will be more glamour the following night, September 11, but of an adults' only nature at An Evening of Burlesque, featuring some of London's top cabaret artists. It promises to be all about tease, not sleaze.

The first five-night show of the season is Rhinestone Mondays, a country music comedy set at an English line-dancing club which features a top notch cast including EastEnders and Extras star Shaun Williamson, ex-New Seekers singer Lyn Paul, and reunites former Steps singers Faye Tozer and Ian H Watkins. It's on from September 13 to 17.

West End drama arrives at the theatre on October 4 with the acclaimed new production of First World War trenches story Journey's End.

David Williams' Mr Stink bills itself as the first 'scratch and sniff' family comedy musical. The show is on from October 19 to 23.

The biggest show of the season - at least until the panto opens - is Calendar Girls, a poignant comedy based on fact about the WI ladies who posed nude for a calendar.



Wartime drama in Journey's End

The impressive cast includes Oxo mum and Loose Women panellist Lynda Bellingham, Rock Follies and Celebrity Big Brother star Rula Lenska, ex-Hi De Hi stalwart Ruth Madoc, Howards' Way star Jan Harvey, Danish dancer Camilla Dallerup of Strictly Come Dancing fame and Brookside actress Jennifer Ellison. The male contingent are Bruno Langley and Joe McGann. The call for bigger buns will be heard at the Grand from October 24 to 29.

Another stalwart of Hi De Hi, Su Pollard, will play the boozy villainess Miss Hannigan in the classic musical Annie, leading a cast of 40. The orphan will be leaving the Hard Knock Life for Easy Street at Daddy Warbucks' mansion, but not without a few mishaps along the way, from November 1 to 5.



The biggest show of the season? Calendar Girls opens on October 24

The Profumo Affair, which rocked the British establishment in 1963, will be remembered in Keeler from November 14 to 19. Paul Nicholas will play Stephen Ward, who caused a sex scandal after he introduced showgirl Keeler (played by Emmerdale's Alice Coulter) to the Secretary of State for War, John Profumo. She was also seeing a Russian naval attaché at the same time as her affair with the married Conservative Government minister.

A star-studded cast will be brought to the city for the latest revival of Alan Ayckbourn's classic comedy Season's Greetings, from November 21 to 26.

EastEnders Glynis Barber and Ricky Groves will be joined by familiar TV drama faces Christopher Timothy (still

fondly remembered as the vet star of All Creatures Great and Small), Denis Lill, Matthew Bose and Jenny Funnell.

It's the early 1960s, the time of such pop hits as Shaking All Over, Runaround Sue and C'mon Everybody, in hit West End show Dreamboats And Petticoats, the rock 'n' roll party show written by Birds Of A Feather and Goodnight Sweetheart scripters Marks and Gran.

Highlights

It is staged at the Grand from November 28 to December 3. Rock 'n' roll fans could also note that Buddy Vs The Killer, a tribute to Buddy Holly and Jerry Lee Lewis, is held at the Lichfield Street venue September 22 to 24.

Cultural highlights will include a special production for schools of Shake-



Line-dancing comedy with Rhinestone Mondays from September 13

speare's Macbeth (Sept 28, matinees), acrobatic Chinese performers in Cirque de Ciel's Shanghai (Sept 30 to Oct 1), and the Ukrainian National Opera of Khariv with Puccini's Madama Butterfly (Oct 17) and Verdi's La Traviata (Oct 18).

Major amateur productions include South Staffs Musical Comedy Company's Guys And Dolls from October 11 to 15 and Bilston Operatic's A Christmas Carol, November 8 to 12.

One-nighters include afternoon nostalgia show Roll Out The Barrel, featuring Terry Bradford and Susie Arvesen (Sept 21); Bilston District Gospel Choir and Voices of Honour feature in Miraculous, a Christian play (Sept 29); The Sensational 60s Experience with The Tremeloes, Herman's Hermits, The Union Gap and The Dreamers (Oct 30); The

Glenn Miller Orchestra Swing Into Christmas (Nov 27); and Cornish comic Jethro (Dec 19). The panto, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, featuring Linda Lusardi, Sam Kane, The Grumbleweeds and Niki Evans, begins its 74 performances on December 10.

As for those looking ahead to 2012, two of the top shows will be West End musical Sister Act featuring Cynthia Erivo, Denise Black and Michael Starke (February 7-18) and Birds Of A Feather. The latter show, reuniting stars of the Essex girls TV sit-com Pauline Quirke, Linda Robson and Lesley Joseph, looks set to be a sell-out success when it opens on March 19. For tickets, contact the box office at www.grandtheatre.co.uk or call 01902 429212.

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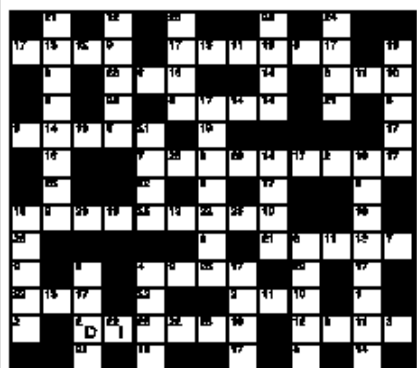
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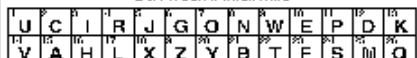
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Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:



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Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

Across

- Presumably I'm bent on breaking the law (4,8)
- Send a telegram for a conductor (5)
- Language used in talking off (5)
- She's among the conspirators (5)
- Clue for a weapon to use in the dark? (5,4)
- A result of some consequences (6)
- Raise a hand to a superior? (6)
- There's a lot to be said for having it (9)
- Time you can't live without (3)
- Board and fare (5,2)
- Cubik with the bear about four (5)
- Hardly descriptive of the time a final demand is met (5,6,3)

Down

- A sort of quilt changed (5,6)
- Some drinkable form of transport (3)
- It's not really remembered (5,3)
- Unable to relax in a little sale, perhaps? (5,2,4)
- Alphabet article missing from the yearbook (5)
- Critic with a heavy man who's not angled (5,6)
- Rubbish preventing the aircraft being detected (5)
- Let's not run off during the night (5)
- Custom of employer (ing) American time (5)
- Child reading part of Captain Fantastic (5)
- Impoverish sort of route (5)
- Angered one holding spiritual instruction (5)

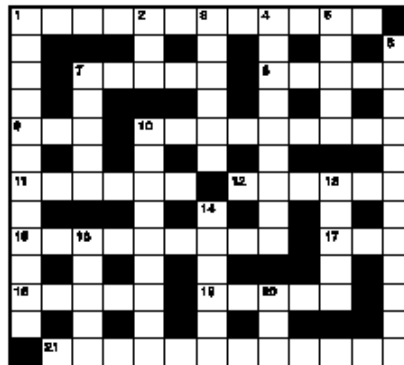
Quick Clues:

Across

- Football (12)
- Boxer (5)
- Comer (5)
- British (3)
- Hazards (5)
- Emotional shock (6)
- Rigorous (6)
- Chairs (5)
- Kiosk (3)
- Translucent gem (5)
- Power (5)
- Accidental (12)

Down

- Constitution (12)
- Crumb (3)
- Shun (5)
- Loosey (5)
- Fashion (5)
- Inclination (12)
- Channel of communication (5)
- Deceive (5)
- Certain (5)
- Reduce (6)
- Baroque (5)
- Obtain (5)



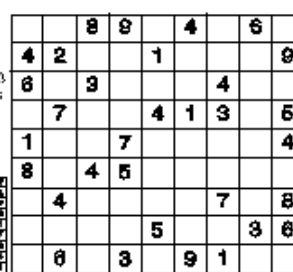
LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS:

CRYPTIC - Across: 4. Tumbler, 5. Answer, 6. Sift, 7. 11, 8. 11, 9. 11, 10. 11, 11. 11, 12. 11, 13. 11, 14. 11, 15. 11, 16. 11, 17. 11, 18. 11, 19. 11, 20. 11, 21. 11, 22. 11, 23. 11, 24. 11, 25. 11, 26. 11. Down: 1. 11, 2. 11, 3. 11, 4. 11, 5. 11, 6. 11, 7. 11, 8. 11, 9. 11, 10. 11, 11. 11, 12. 11, 13. 11, 14. 11, 15. 11, 16. 11, 17. 11, 18. 11, 19. 11, 20. 11, 21. 11, 22. 11, 23. 11, 24. 11, 25. 11, 26. 11.

Sudoku

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS:



Circlegram

Replace the question mark with a letter so that the letters within each circle can be arranged to form words on a common theme. What are the three words, and the letter represented by the question mark?



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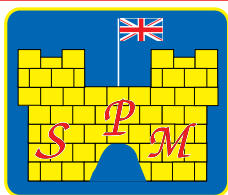
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£530 pcm
End Terraced Property, Lounge, Kitchen, Bathroom with Shower, Two Bedrooms, Gas Central Heating, Front & Rear Gardens, Garage at Rear.

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£575 pcm
Semi Detached Property, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Front & Rear Gardens, Off Road Parking

KINGSWINFORD**NEW**

THE PORTWAY
£650 pcm
Semi Detached Property, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, Shower Room, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Front & Rear Gardens

KINGSWINFORD

QUEEN STREET
£575 pcm
Mid Terrace Property, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, Two Double Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Unfurnished

WALL HEATH

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£550 pcm
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£335 pcm
Purpose Built Studio, Entrance Hall, Lounge, Kitchen, Bedroom, Area, Shower Room, Unfurnished, Off Road Parking

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£610 pcm
Semi Detached Property, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, Utility Area, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Carpets & Curtains, Garage, Unfurnished.

KINGSWINFORD

THE PORTWAY
£380 pcm
First Floor Flat, Lounge, Kitchen, One Bedroom, Bathroom with Shower, Gas Central Heating, Partial Double Glazing, Carpets & Curtains, Unfurnished

PENSNETT

PRIMROSE PARK
£525 pcm
Modern Terrace Property, Lounge, Kitchen, WC, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Carpets and Curtains. Off Road Parking

KINGSWINFORD

COT LANE
£395 pcm
First Floor Flat, Lounge, Kitchen/Diner, One Bedroom, Bathroom, Electric Heating, Carpets & Curtains, Unfurnished, Small garden at rear, Off Road Parking

TIPTON

GRACE ROAD
£495 pcm
Modern apartment, Lounge, kitchen, bathroom, two bedrooms, electric heating, double glazing, carpets and curtains. Unfurnished.

WORDSLEY

CHAPEL STREET
£435 pcm
First Floor Flat, Lounge, Kitchen, One Bedroom, Bathroom with Shower, Electric Heating, Laminate Flooring & Curtains, Unfurnished

KINGSWINFORD

THE PORTWAY
£650 pcm
Detached Property, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, Bathroom, Three Bedrooms, Conservatory, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Unfurnished, Front & Rear Gardens, Double Garage, Off

KINGSWINFORD

RANGWAYS ROAD
£725 pcm
Link Detached Property, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, WC, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Carpets & Curtains, Unfurnished

TIPTON

AVERN CLOSE
£360 pcm
Purpose built flat, Lounge, Kitchen, One Bedroom, Bathroom with Shower, Electric Heating, Carpets & Curtains, Unfurnished, Allocated Parking

KINGSWINFORD

OAKFIELD AVENUE
£795 pcm
Detached Property, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, Four Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Front & Rear Gardens, Garage & Off Road Parking, Unfurnished

BROCKMOOR

HIGH STREET
£495 pcm
Terrace Property, Lounge, Kitchen/Diner, Utility Room, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Carpets & Curtains, Unfurnished, Rear

ROWLEY REGIS

TITFORD LANE
£345 pcm
Ground Floor Flat, Lounge, Kitchen, One Bedroom, Bathroom, Allocated Parking, Unfurnished

BILSTON

SARAH CLOSE
£475 pcm
Semi-detached property, Lounge, kitchen, two bedrooms, bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing, front and rear gardens, carpets and curtains. Unfurnished.

GORNAL

EATON CRESCENT
£570 pcm
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This charming home in Kidderminster Road South is on the market with estate agent Andrew Grant for £575,000

Detached with paddock and country views



In this spacious home in Hagley, the lounge has a feature fireplace and burner in the large lounge

THE chance to buy a charming detached house with a paddock has arisen in Hagley.

Number 152 Kidderminster Road South boasts countryside views, a dining room, sitting room, garden room, utility, dressing room, nursery/study, three bedrooms, large rear garden, paddock and stable.

This spacious home is on the market for offers in the region of £575,000 via Andrew Grant.

The reception hall has deep skirting, an oak floor, ceiling coving, cloakroom and WC.

The 24ft 3in x 10ft 11in sitting room includes a feature fireplace with coal effect gas fire, ceiling coving, deep skirting and sliding patio doors to the

garden room, which has storage cupboards and a storeroom.

In the dining room, there is oak flooring, skirting, ceiling coving and a feature fireplace with a multi-fuel burner.

There is a range of drawer, wall and base units, electric oven, halogen hob, a one-and-a-half bowl stainless steel single drainer sink unit and space for a dishwasher and washing machine in the kitchen, while the utility has space for a fridge freezer and leads to the garden room.

Stunning

Upstairs, the master bedroom measures 17ft 6in x 17ft 9in and has stunning countryside views, deep skirting, a dressing area with hanging rails and part tiled en suite shower room with a vanity wash basin, WC and double width shower.

There are three further bedrooms,

two with fitted wardrobes, a nursery/study and family bathroom, which has a bath with chrome mixer tap and shower attachment, pedestal wash basin, WC, bidet, storage cupboards and heated towel rail.

Outside, the house is set back behind an ample gravelled frontage leading to a garage with a remote controlled door.

The rear garden has a patio, brick garden store, steps up to a further patio area with raised borders, an ornamental fish pond, lawn, pergola, mature and established plants and trees, greenhouse, shed, tap, outside lighting, gated side entrance and path leading to the 0.44 acre post and rail paddock with a 12ft x 12ft stable.

For more information or to arrange a viewing, contact the agent on 01905 734735.



Two more Clios are lining up to join the growing Gordini range

WEEKS after widening the Wind Roadster range to include an affordable 1.2-litre version, Renault has produced two extra Clios for the burgeoning Gordini line-up.

The Gordini range has proved a hit, and the Clio Gordini accounts for 27 per cent of overall Clio Renaultsport sales in Europe and over 10 per cent in the UK.

The latest incarnations of the Gordini badge debut in three-door form, with the petrol 1.6 VVT 128 and diesel 1.5 dCi 106.

They enable UK buyers to get the look and feel of the 200hp flagship Gordini, but with lower fuel consumption, emissions and running costs, including insurance. The petrol model welcomes the rev-loving engine from the former GT, itself slightly detuned from the Twingo Renaultsport 133. In the warmed over Clio, it gives performance of 0-62mph in 9.3 seconds, combined with 42.2mpg on the combined cycle. The Clio Gordini 128 costs £14,000 on-the-road.

The second version comes with the 1.5 dCi 106 and costs £14,950. Nippy thanks to compact dimensions and lively performance, the newcomer

is just at home on the open road as it is in town, thanks to its standard six-speed gearbox. It is capable of 62.8mpg on the combined cycle, or at the other end of the performance spectrum, 11.9mpg. Emitting only 110g CO₂, it is free from road fund licence and costs only £20 in the second year.

Whichever engine buyers choose, each version retains the usual Gordini styling.

Stripes

On the outside, it sports twin white racing stripes across the bonnet, roof and tailgate, co-ordinating white electric folding door mirrors and front bumper strip, Gordini badges, 16-inch Turini alloy wheels, body colour rear spoiler and twin tailpipe exhausts.

Other external enhancements are body coloured side mouldings and door handles, extra tinted side and rear windows, front fog lights and fixed cornering lights.

On the inside, creature comforts abound. The Gordini touches begin with grey cloth upholstery with Gordini logo (grey or blue leather are optional

and blue cloth is a no-cost option), leather steering wheel with grey detail and white stripe, satin chrome-effect gearknob with blue Gordini badge and black surround with satin chrome lever. Other elements include gloss black detailing for the centre console, dash and air vent surrounds, and a white rev counter.

Both newcomers come highly equipped with a 4x20W radio CD with aux input and fingertip remote controls, auto lights and wipers, climate control, cruise control, front curtain airbags and speed limiter.

The two new versions can be upgraded with several options, including Carminat TomTom satellite navigation, multi-functional TunePoint or electric panoramic sunroof.

Metallic paint comes in Malta Blue, Pearl Black and Ruby Red. The standard body colour, Glacier White, features contrasting anthracite grey Gordini racing stripes, door mirrors and front bumper insert.

More information is available at <http://www.renault.co.uk/cars/model/new/clio/gordini.aspx>

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07 Reg	BMW 116i SE BMW Silver, Climate Control, Alloys, CD, FSH, 38k	£8495	£49
06 Reg	CITROEN XSARA PICASSO 2.0 HDI DESIRE MPV Silver, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD, FSH, 49k	£4495	£29
06 Reg	FIAT GRANDE PUNTO 1.2 ACTIVE Orange, CD, Low Insurance, Grp 2, 30k	£3695	£24
57 Reg	FIAT GRANDE PUNTO 1.2 ACTIVE Grey, CD, Low Insurance, Grp 2	£4195	£28
04 Reg	FORD FIESTA 1.4 FLAME Orange, Alloys, CD	£3495	£23
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07 Reg	JAGUAR X-TYPE 2.0i Grey, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD, FSH	£5995	£38
57 Reg	JAGUAR X-TYPE 2.0i CLASSIC Silver, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD	£6195	£40
56 Reg	JAGUAR X-TYPE 2.0i S ESTATE Blue, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD, Leather Seats, FSH	£6195	£40
02 Reg	NISSAN MICRA 1.0 S Grey, PAS, Low Insurance Grp 3, p/x to clear	£1495	£9
53 Reg	PEUGEOT 206 1.4 SE Silver, A/C, Alloys, CD Multi-Change	£2695	£17
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51 Reg	PEUGEOT 307 2.0 XSI Black, A/C, Alloys, CD, Half Leather Sports Seats	£1995	£12
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05 Reg	PEUGEOT 307 1.6 X-LINE Red, A/C, Alloys, CD	£3695	£24
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55 Reg	PEUGEOT 307 1.6 S Red, A/C, Alloys, CD, FSH, 55k	£4495	£29
55 Reg	PEUGEOT 307 1.6 S Black, 2006, A/C, Alloys, CD, FSH, 37k	£4695	£30

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57 Reg	PEUGEOT 307 1.6 S Silver, A/C, Alloys, CD, FSH, 39k	£5195	£33
56 Reg	RENAULT CLIO 1.6 DYNAMIQUE (New Shape), A/C, Alloys, CD, 5-door, Low Ins Grp 3, FSH	£3995	£26
56 Reg	RENAULT CLIO 1.5 DCI DYNAMIQUE (New Shape) Diesel, Black, A/C, CD, 5-door, FSH, 32k	£3695	£26
06 Reg	RENAULT MEGANE 1.9 DCI DYNAMIQUE Silver, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD, Panoramic Roof	£3195	£21
04 Reg	RENAULT MEGANE 1.5 DCI DYNAMIQUE Silver, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD, £30 Road Tax, 42k	£4195	£28
57 Reg	RENAULT MEGANE 1.5 DCI DYNAMIQUE Blue, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD, £30 Road Tax, FSH	£4695	£30
07 Reg	RENAULT MEGANE 1.5 DCI DYNAMIQUE Grey, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD, £30 Road Tax, FSH	£4995	£33
08 Reg	RENAULT MEGANE 1.5 DCI DYNAMIQUE Grey, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD, £30 Road Tax, FSH	£6195	£40
04 Reg	RENAULT MEGANE 1.6 DYNAMIQUE Cabriolet, Blue, A/C, 18in Alloys, CD, Panoramic Roof, 45k	£4695	£30
04 Reg	RENAULT MEGANE 1.6 DYNAMIQUE Cabriolet, Silver, A/C, Alloys, CD, Panoramic Roof, FSH	£6195	£40
04 Reg	RENAULT SCENIC 1.6 DYNAMIQUE MPV Silver, A/C, Alloys, CD	£2495	£17
07 Reg	RENAULT SCENIC 1.5 DCI DYNAMIQUE MPV Silver, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD, FSH	£4695	£30
57 Reg	RENAULT SCENIC 1.5 DCI DYNAMIQUE MPV Gold, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD, FSH, 50i	£5495	£33
54 Reg	VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.7 CDTI 16V CLUB Silver, Diesel, A/C, CD	£3695	£24
57 Reg	VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6i LIFE Silver, 2008, A/C, CD, 53k	£5195	£33
07 Reg	VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.3 CDTI 16V LIFE Silver, Diesel, A/C, CD, Low Road Tax	£4995	£32
56 Reg	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2 SXi Silver, A/C, Alloys, CD, FSH	£3695	£24
56 Reg	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2i SXi Silver, A/C, Alloys, CD, 5-door, 30k	£4195	£28
08 Reg	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.3 CDTI DESIGN Silver, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD, Half Leather Seats, FSH	£5695	£36
57 Reg	VAUXHALL TIGRA 1.4i SPORT Convertible, Blue, A/C, Alloys, CD, Leather Sport Seats, 44k	£5695	£36
55 Reg	VAUXHALL MERIVA 1.6 ENJOY Blue, A/C, CD, FSH	£3695	£24
06 Reg	VAUXHALL VECTRA 1.8i VVT DESIGN Grey, A/C, Alloys, CD, Half Leather Sport Seats	£3995	£26
07 Reg	VAUXHALL VECTRA 1.9 CDTI EXCLUSIVE Silver, A/C, CD, 48k	£5195	£33
53 Reg	VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 1.8i CLUB Automatic MPV Silver, A/C, Alloys, CD, FSH	£5195	£33
53 Reg	VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 2.0i DTI ELEGANCE MPV Silver, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD, 60k	£3695	£24
08 Reg	VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 1.6i LIFE MPV Gold, A/C, Alloys, CD, 7 Seater, 23k	£5695	£36
56 Reg	VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 1.9 CDTI CLUB Black, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD, 7 Seater, FSH	£6195	£40
53 Reg	VOLKSWAGEN BEETLE 2.0 S Silver, A/C, Alloys, CD, Full Winter Pack, FSH	£3695	£24
55 Reg	VOLKSWAGEN PASSAT 1.9 SE TDI Blue, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD, P/X to clear	£3495	£23
56 Reg	VOLKSWAGEN GOLF 2.0 SPORT TDI Silver, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD	£6695	£41

All Prices after £300 Minimum Part Exchange Allowance
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Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO₂ emissions (g/km). Vauxhall range: Urban: 14.4 (19.6)-67.3 (4.2), Extra-urban: 27.4 (10.3)-91.1 (3.1), Combined: 20.6 (13.7)-80.7 (3.5). CO₂ emissions: 324-94g/km.

*Not available on Expression, ES, ES Tech models. Finance provided by Vauxhall Finance, a trading style of GMAC UK plc, PO Box 6666, Cardiff, CF15 7YT. Finance is subject to status, terms and conditions. Applicants must be 18 years or over. Offer applies to private individuals. Vauxhall Partners and small businesses 1-24 (purchase only excluding B2B). All other customers are excluded. Offer available on orders or registrations before 30 September 2011. Vauxhall Lifetime Warranty covers lifetime ownership of first registered keeper, 100,000 mile limit. Terms and conditions apply. *Customer deposit shown after deduction of Vauxhall contribution.

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2005 (05) VAUXHALL ASTRA CDTI 16V LIFE 1.7 Diesel, Manual, 56,000 miles, Silver, 5-dr, 2 owners, 3 months warranty, 12 months MOT and fully serviced. £4990

2006 (06) PEUGEOT 307 1.4 Petrol, Manual, 32,000 miles, Black, 5-dr, 2 owners, 12 months MOT, 3 months warranty and fully serviced. £4990

2006 (06) RENAULT MEGANE SCENIC DYNAMIQUE 1.6 Petrol, Manual, 42,000 miles, Blue, 5-dr, 3 owners, 12 months MOT, 3 months warranty and fully serviced. £4990

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Low failure rate takes manufacturer to the top of the table with What Car?

Honda wins on reliability



The Jazz won the Supermini class in the JD Power Survey



The British-built Civic came ninth in the Fleet News annual survey

HONDA beat rivals to the top of the What Car? league table thanks to an impressively-low nine per cent failure rate in the first 12 months.

Honda dominated the top of the SUV table with the CR-V and CR-Z at number one and two. Jazz and Accord both came fifth in their respective classes while Civic came third in the small hatchback category.

What Car? editor in chief, Chas Hallett said: "The success of Honda in this year's reliability study is very impressive, especially as this is Honda's sixth overall win as the UK's most reliable car maker."

"Reliability is key for car buyers. The car makers at the bottom of the study have a lot of work to do to catch up with Honda," he added.

What Car? is not the only title to recognise Honda's bullet-proof reliability.

The 2011 Which? Car survey recently named Honda as the most reliable brand and the 2011 JD Power vehicle ownership satisfaction study saw Honda retain the number two spot in the overall league table – the highest-placed volume manufacturer.

Influential

The JD Power Survey awarded Jazz its eighth consecutive win in the supermini class and for the second year running Accord topped the chart in the family car category, while Civic and CR-V were ranked second in their respective classes.

Honda also holds the top spot as Britain's most reliable car manufacturer in the influential FNA50 survey. Honda beat off rivals in this annual survey which is published by industry-leading publication Fleet News.

The report covers 1.5 million vehicles owned or managed by the country's 50 largest contract hire companies. Honda also featured highly in the top ten most reliable cars with the Accord and British-built Civic in second and ninth place respectively.

Dave Hodgetts, the managing director of Honda (UK), said: "We strive to make every second of Honda ownership an enjoyable experience, and that means looking after our drivers throughout their use of our cars."

"This all starts with building reliable and high quality cars that are affordable to run and maintain, but continues with service at our dealers that exceeds expectation."

At the heart of Honda's approach is understanding and meeting customer requirements.

Honda takes a complete approach to build quality and vehicle reliability.

Reliability isn't just a focus during the manufacturing process but also at the research and development stage, during the parts procurement process and is a key part of the work Honda carries out with suppliers.

Only by focusing on vehicle quality throughout the design and build process can Honda deliver such a strong record for cars that just don't go wrong.

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Fuel consumption figures for the Honda range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 22.2–61.4 (12.7–4.6), Extra Urban 40.4–67.3 (7.0–4.2), Combined 31.0–64.2 (9.1–4.4). CO2 emissions: 215–101 g/km. Price Points: £11,735 applies to Jazz 1.2 i-VTEC S Manual and includes metallic paint; £12,995 applies to Civic 1.4 Type S i-Shift and excludes metallic paint (£440 extra); £22,365 applies to CR-V 2.0 i-VTEC SE Manual and includes metallic paint; £18,135 applies to CR-Z 1.5 i-VTEC IMA S Manual and includes metallic paint. Offers valid on new retail cars registered from 1 July to 30 September 2011 and *excludes Jazz Hybrid. **Honda Hire Purchase:** Indemnities may be required in certain circumstances. Finance is only available to persons aged 18 or over subject to status. All figures are correct at time of publication but may be subject to change. Credit provided by Honda Finance Europe PLC, 470 London Road, Slough, Berkshire SL3 8QY. **Servicing:** 4 years free servicing or 50,000 miles, whichever comes first and includes a maximum of 4 services. Free servicing covers the manufacturer's scheduled servicing only. **Roadside Assistance:** Covers the vehicle and authorised drivers for 4 years emergency breakdown, subject to the vehicle being maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's servicing schedule.

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Deaths

GATTWARD

Gordon William

Passed away peacefully at home, on August 16, 2011, aged 93. Sadly missed by his Wife Rosemarie, Daughters Barbara and Catherine and all his family and friends.

Funeral Service to take place on Tuesday, August 30, at Gornal Crematorium, at 3.30pm.

Family flowers only, donations gratefully received for Mary Stevens Hospice, c/o

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Lost & Found

LOST—Large grey British blue cat, named See she, last seen in Albrighton, August 11, no collar but is microchipped. 07932 563483.

LOST—Set of Keys in Dudley Town Centre, on Friday morning, August 19, morning. Contact 07770 500065.

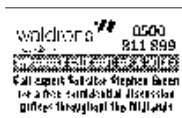
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GOD'S DEALINGS WITH THE JEWISH RACE. The Jew, natural and spiritual. August 28 at 6pm The Community Centre, High Street, Kingswinford. Or write to The Christadelphians, PREEP, C8T, WY16B, Kingswinford DY6 9BR for free information pack or ring 01384 278595 for recorded message.

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We meet every member so our profiles are accurate. No internet fibbers. We'll arrange the meeting so no fear of a no show. No age limits. Our youngest Client is 21, Oldest 78. What are you waiting for?
0121 520 3715
or 07794 144360
For Further Information

MALE 63.
6ft tall, slim, fit, full of life.

Non smoker solvent.
Seeks female of similar status, to take on life together.

Box Number P17229,
Express and Star,
Queen Street,

Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.



PENN COLTS FC
Under 16's
Season 2011/12
Outfield Players needed to strengthen current squad. Call Doug 07977 460525.

Under 15's
Season 2011/12
Players needed for all positions.
Call Wex 07702 559939.

ACCOUNTANT
Sought to provide help to Self-Employed Business Person.

Please write to: Box Number P17224, Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

PROFESSIONAL MALE
Attractive, well groomed, 40, non smoker, would like to meet bubbly open minded female, 25-40 for friendship and fun.

Birmingham, Black Country or surrounding areas.
Box Number P17226,
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Queen Street,
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

URGENTLY WANTED Burial Plot in Green Lane, Bilston. Please contact 07812 006795.

WEDNESFIELD FC. BOYS
Aged 6, to form New Team. Call Dave: 07939 279996

GIRLS ACADEMY
Age 5 to 8 years.
Paul and Stacey: 07906 807749.

FA. and NVQ Qualified Coaches.
CRB Checked.
Starting New Teams.
All Abilities Welcome.

YOUNG BOY REQUIRES FARMING EXPERIENCE
South Staffs area.
Please contact his Grandad on 01902 677322.
Harper Adams
insist on this experience for would be Students.

1ST CLASS FOOTBALL COACHING
Football tournament Friday, Aug 19, 10.10-10.30pm. Three day course Wed, Aug 24 - Fri, Aug 26, 10.30pm. £35 or £15 per day. Ages 4-11 boys and girls of all abilities.
At St Benedict Biscop School, Wombourne.
Also football coach required for after school clubs from September onwards.
Call Darryl 07971 384316.
1stclassfootball.co.uk

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Sturdy 4 wheel and 4mph, in excellent condition. Very comfortable. Dismantles without tools to fit in a car. Also for sale Rascal Taxi.
Only used twice.
£325 each.
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PARIS SHOPRIDER SCOOTER
Three years old, hardly used, as new, £475 ono. 01384 288496.

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antiques

ANTIQUE solid fuel Burner, (Poppy stove), restored to full working order, very rare piece, £750. 07971 368968.

VALENTINE AUCTIONS
Cosford
Lots wanted for September 19 sale.
Antiques, Collectables, House Clearances, Probate. Monday - Friday 11am-4pm. Tel 01902 375555

bikes

ELECTRIC BWA BYKE Euro, Excellent £450. Carrera Subway Hybrid, Mudguards, rear carrier, as new. £110. 07745 969393.

collectables & memorabilia

BALLY ONE ARM BANDIT
Tie Tac Toe, £200 ono. 01765 714096.

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over 50% off thousands of items
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THREE-PIECE Oatmeal suite. Nearly new, excellent condition. £200. 01562 753475.

3 SEATER SOFA, black leather, only 6 months old. £300. 07540 142556.

house clearances

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THREE-PIECE Oatmeal suite. Nearly new, excellent condition. £200. 01562 753475.

SCOOTER FOR SALE
RASCAL TAXI 4
With swivelling seat, dismantles to go in car boot, good condition, with charger and spare key.
£350 ono.
Telephone 01691 839940.

VECTRIX MAXI
Electric scooter, 200w only 50 miles, free tax, not for the faint hearted, 70mph, 50p to charge, same as 800cc scooter, exchange for big petrol motorbike, scooter, diesel or LPG car. 07906 143520.

DREAM MAKER
ELECTRIC SINGLE BED.
Head and foot adjustment via remote control, 6ft 6ins long x 3ft wide with 22ins high, only 6 months old, as new. Excellent condition. £385. 01922 492343.

kitchens & bathrooms

BEKO FRIDGE, white, 1 year old, £250. 07540 142556.

FITTED KITCHEN
Solid medium oak doors, 10 bases, 10 wall units, double oven, housing, induction hob, integrated fridge and dishwasher, sink, taps, can be seen fitted, can deliver. £700. Call 01384 292226.

FULL KITCHEN, 14 base and top units, work top, hob, double oven, dishwasher, fridge/freezer, £425. 01630 655052.

music shop

UKULELE LESSONS. Beginners course. Starts Saturday 3rd Sept. W-ton Town Centre. 07735 120162.

WANTED HEAVY METAL
LEAD GUTTERIST
FOR CLOVEN HOOF

Great image and dedication essential.
Shows in Europe and US waiting.
Send Photo and Demo to
Box Number P17219,
Express and Star,
Queen Street,
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

plumbing & heating

ORCHARD PLUMBING & HEATING
Bathroom suites, boiler breakdown/servicing from only £45. 01384 861187 / 07956 487381

removals

A AND M CHEAP Removals local, call 0800 587 0377 / 07749 941319.

KINGSWINFORD REMOVALS
relocation, removals, quotes. 07966 281957 or 07802 876876.

items wanted

ALL SILVER AND GOLD
Jewellery, watches, etc.
01384 828487 or 07724 464390

skip hire

W.T. SKIPS
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ABSOLUTELY THE BEST price given for single item or house cleared. Antique, old, reproduction. 01384 482155/ 07802 475693.

ALMILITERIA medals, weapon, armbands, badges, etc. Private buyer. Very good prices paid. 01384 828487 or 07724 464390.

FOOTBALL PROGRAMMES
Tickets and other sports memorabilia.
Top prices paid for the right item.
Call Paul 01543 251743.

RAILWAY COLLECTIONS
WANTED
ANY GAUGE OR AGE
Hornby, Bachman, Wrenn and Graham/Farish.
Any make, also live steam. Guaranteed top cash prices paid!!

0121 602 2569 or 07891 713547
URGENTLY REQUIRED DVDs, CDs and Games, good price paid, can collect.
07889 467889 or 01905 731737.

WANTED—Calogras fridge, Calogras cooker to suit small caravan. 07815 195807 or 01584 861482.

alarms/security

CTB ALARMS LTD Burglar Alarms supplied & fitted £110. Service/Repairs. 0121 604 8964

PREMIER ALARMS supplied & fitted £110. All quotes beaten, servicing/repairs 0121 601 9791.

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SPECIALISTS IN BLOCK PAVING
AND TARMACADAM
Slab Laying and Driveways
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Insured and Registered Company
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ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS
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PRESTWOOD FENCING
Landscaping
Patios, Turfing & Decking
Tree Work and Root Grinding
FREE QUOTES
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07947 879403

GARDENS TIDIED From £5 per garden. 25 years experience. 01902 713 106 / 07813 164 086.

KINGSWINFORD GARDEN SERVICES
Lawns cut, hedge and tree work, fencing supplied and fitted, garden clearing, turfing, gravel, patios etc.
07522 461025.

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MG ROOFING Flat roofs, tiling,

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Needed. Load and Remove any

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HIDEAWAY PLAY HOUSE

10ftx5ft, 2 storey with internal

ladder. Shipload construction.

Slight attention needed.

Buyer to collect/dismantle.

£250 ono.

07774 715386 or 01922 402566.

tv/home

entertainments

sales

SAMSUNG 37" TV

slim line, Samsung blue ray

DVD player, Samsung cinema

surround with front and rear

tall speakers, complete with

black and chrome stand.

£400.

01384 261850.

service

A TV PLASMA & LCD REPAIRS

Area, Wall mount, 330251.

Any area. 7 days. 07850 330251.

wedding bells

bridal wear

Wedding dresses, bridesmaids

dresses, mothers of the bride

dresses, flower girls, etc.

01384 236188, 01902 887628.

http://elite-wedding-services

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A ALL YEAR DISCOUNT

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stunning white Rolls shadow,

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Any occasion, we'll get you

there in style. White and Pink

limes available. Free bubbly.

01384 34581 / 07974 920254.

leisure

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01384 261850

AVONDALE CAMBRIAN

CRIS Reg. 2-berth, gas,

electric water, shower, flush

toilet, cooker, oven, fridge,

heating, curtains, blinds, fly

screens, alarm.

Lightweight tourer complete

with TRIO awning and fitted

with TRUMA remote control

motor mover.

Superb condition.

£2,500.

01384 254530.

BEDFORD CF250 DIESEL

MOTORHOME

1980, fridge/freezer, cooker,

microwave, electric kettle, gas

and electric heater, shower,

cassette toilet, radio/TV, mar-

vellous condition for age, tax

until Dec.

MoT March 2012.

£2,250.

07791 88646

(Telford).

BESSACRY E530

LUXURY 2-BERTH

MOTORHOME

Sat nav, freeriver TV, awning

+ many more extras.

Reg 08.

7 months MoT 2 months Tax.

FSH, 3,500 miles.

£24,500.

Telephone:

Four Crosses 07772 264698.

CARNARY HAULFRYN

2007 model, (32 x 12, 2 bed-

rooms, (one with en-suite),

GCH, decking area, site fees

paid up to 17.04.12, close to

beach.

£28,000 ono.

07973 185304.

COVEN

MOBILE HOME

12ft x 45ft, two bed, bath with

separate shower, CH, fitted

kitchen.

Viewing highly

recommended, plus beautiful

gardens. No Pets.

Definitely worth viewing.

Reduced from £85,000 to

£82,000.

Telephone: 01922 403462.

ECCLES DIAMOND

1998 18FT

2 berth, end bathroom, new

motor mover, 19ins TV Combi

and Sky Box. New tyres with

Tryon bands. Plus extras.

£3,200 ono.

01384 863021.

FIAT SCUDO HUMMING

BIRD DAY VAN / CAMPER

Y reg, 2011. Lift up roof, gas

hob, electric oven,

electric cool box,

pumped water, two single

beds, swivel front seats,

porch awning.

Tested and tested.

£5,250 ono.

0121 550 8106.

LUNAR CLUBMAN 400/2

1993. Excellent condition, must

be seen, Isabella awning and

many extras.

£1,850 ono.

07974 106458 or 07791 456935.

STATIC CARAVAN

ATLAS RUBY SUPER

2003, 6 berth,

2 bedrooms.

Sited on Brynnowen Holiday

Park, Borth.

Reduced to £12,000.

07912 344700.

STATIC CARAVAN

Excellent condition, 6 berth,

2 bedrooms.

Mid Wales Coast site with all

amenities.

£6,500

including 2011 site fees.

07958 080292.

WILLERBY VOGUE MK5

2008, 2 bed, 6 berth, immacu-

late condition, with UPVC

double glazing and central

heating, sited in a beautiful

peaceful five star location in

Shropshire.

£37,000 no offers.

07579 702116.

WILLERBY WINCHESTER

2004, 38x12ft, sited on a beauti-

fully campsite, fully run site, open

10 months a year. Baxter

Mill, Llanfair Caereinion.

Two bedroom, sleep up to 6, 3

piece suite, dining room table

and chairs, kingsize bed with

walk in wardrobe and ensuite

toilet, bathroom with large

walk in shower, fully equipped

kitchen, decking around full

length of caravan and

back overlooking river.

Everything is included, real

home from home, must be

seen.

£19,000.

01938 810990.

EXTREMELY RELUCTANT

SALE

(MY HORSE TOO BIG)

Renault Master horse box,

diesel, 46,500 miles, 2,495cc,

LWB 3.5, August 1998, side

loading, rear tack 2 windows

added, gas ramp, new battery

(with cut off for storing), takes 2

16.2h horses, more

economical than my car, lady

owners, serviced and

reliable, any trial, MoT April

2012 and tax.

Need space as bigger box

arriving.

£6,800 ono.

01746 787680 (evenings).

161H HANDSOME

ANDALUSIAN CROSS

10 year old coloured gelding,

has done dressage and can

jump, would suit confident,

experienced rider, will excel

with right person.

£2,500 inc tack. 07960 325026.

LABRADOR 7 month old black

dog. Excellent working Partner.

Good with other dogs and Children.

Made good pet or working

dog. £250 ono. 07839 701011.

LABRADOR CROSS. Black with

white chest, male, neutered,

microchipped.

Genuine sale. £100. 07887 913791.

014785 662307.

MAITSE and Maltese cross

puppies now available from £500.

Call 01785 662307.

KOI FOR SALE. 3-4ins 5-6ins.

Wolverhampton area, from £5.

07968 278441.

LABRADOR 7 month old black

dog. Excellent working Partner.

Good with other dogs and Children.

Made good pet or working

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LABRADOR CROSS. Black with

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microchipped.

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puppies now available from £500.

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SUZUKI IGNIS SPORT

2005, 67k miles, Limited Edition, VVT DOHC, metallic black air con, 12 months MoT, one owner, pas, tax, spots, petrol, Recaro seats.

£2,750 ono.

01952 502432.

SUZUKI SWIFT 1.3, 3dr, 2008, 16,800 miles, MoT June 2012, May 2012. £4,700 ono.

★ TOYOTA AURIS 1.6TR 2007 16,500 miles, tax grey fsh MoT July 2012, tax Dec 1 owner Shd, £7,000 ono. 07506 133683.

TOYOTA LUCINDA ESTIMA

M Reg, 1997, 7 seater with captain seats, J Top, low bar, new tyres, battery and back box, 2.2 Diesel automatic, MoT March 2012, good clean condition.

£2,000 ono.

Telephone 07758 249735



TOYOTA MR2 T-BAR

1998, black, 96,000 miles, 2.0L, 11 months MoT SH.

£2,300 ono.

07914 084189.

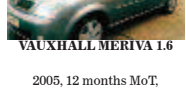
TOYOTA RAV 4 NRG, X reg, 77,000 miles, petrol, tax, MoT Perfect runner, great condition, frequently serviced, Metallic burgundy. £2,900. 01902 661773.

TOYOTA YARIS Colour Collection 1.0, 2002, 3dr, 67,000 miles, red, MoT March, tax Oct, good condition, fsh, £2,500 ono. 07794 716090.

VAUXHALL ASTRA 03 reg, 2.0, DTI, electric windows, very good condition. Taxed and Tested. £1,750 ono. 07837 054636.

VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6, Trip-tronic, black 05 reg, 40,800 miles, excellent inside and out, £2,500. 01902 862482.

VAUXHALL CORSA 1.3 Diesel, 2001, 57,000 miles, MoT, low tax, £3,500 ono. Telephone 07854 235320.



VAUXHALL MERIVA 1.6

2005, 12 months MoT.

Six months tax,

£4,300.

07837 671335.

VAUXHALL MERIVA 1.6, 53 plate, blue, 37,000 miles, fsh, long tax and MoT, £2,200 ono. Telephone 01299 824242.

VAUXHALL SIGNUM 2.0T ELEGANCE Tax/MoT February 2012, 04 reg, 35,000 miles, fully loaded, 4 disk CD changer, air con, etc, very good condition, 1 previous lady owner.

£2,999 ono.

Telephone 07592 206520.

VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 1.8 COMFORT AUTOMATIC 2001, Y reg, petrol, silver/blue, 84k, seven months MoT/tax, service history, RCL, EW, EM, e x c e l l e n t condition. £1,600 ono. 07752 830932 or 01384 221009

VOLKSWAGEN GOLF 1.4S 16V, 5dr, hatch, 2001, 67k miles, red, tax May 2012, MoT Dec 2011, cdi, pas, abs, electric windows, very clean.

£1,850 ono.

01384 261466.



VOLVO C70 CONVERTIBLE

2007, silver, 2.4 petrol, auto, 58,000 miles, FSH, air con, black leather interior, CD, RACI handfree, Volvo towbar, excellent condition.

£8,700 ono.

Contact 07894 490985.

VW POLO 1.0 01 reg, 11 months MoT/tax, 43k, lady owner, good condition, £1,650. o.n.o. 07715 548137.

VOLVO S40, 1999, T reg, 125,000 miles, 12 months MoT, 6 months tax, £775 ono. 07950 199377.

VOLVO V40 ESTATE 2001, green with full beige leather, MoT 10 months, tax to May 2012, fsh, high miles but good runner, 3 new tyres.

£985 ono.

07896 157640.

VW Lupo 1.0, 3dr, red, 02 plate, 90,000 miles, 11 months MoT, 3 months tax, £1,395. o.n.o. 01902 440260.

commercial vehicles

CITROEN BERLINGO VAN R reg, Tax, MoT very economical, good runner, roof rack, £600 ono. 07909 807711.

CITROEN BERLINGO, 2005, 85,000 miles, 11 months MoT, five months tax, good condition, £2,000 ono. 07875 163554.

PEUGEOT PARTNER 6 months tax, 12 months MoT, 54 reg, 75k, £2,500. Call 01384 560017.

driving tuition

ALFA ROMEO 156 Sportwagon (estate), 02 reg, long MoT, red leather, AC, 1 owner, £1,490 ono. 07018 621300.

AUDI A4 P reg, 4dr saloon, maroon, MoT and tax Oct 11, reasonably good condition, good runner, 0850 ono. 07946 229602.

BMW 730i 63k miles, 1991, Taxed and MoT January 2012, Good condition. £900. 07752 02650.

CITROEN SAXO forte, 1.1, X reg, tax and MoT, new tyres and exhaust, very good condition, £900 ono. 01902 745771.

CITROEN SAXO VTR, 11 months MoT, no tax, X reg, black, £750 ono. 07530 253970.

CITROEN XM PRESTIGE 1994, 110,000 miles, grey, 2 litre, Fast becoming a classic, great condition, all Prestige extras inc full leather, MoT mid Jan, tax end August.

£550 ono.

01543 410135.

FIAT PUNTO 1.2 2002, low mileage, radio cassette, MoT'd and taxed, metallic blue, PAS, city button, very clean condition, good runner, ideal first car.

£1,450 o.n.o.

07791 858367 or 01543 416262.

FORD ESCORT Convertible, 1996, yellow, MoT, tax, fsh, 125 Zetec, drives perfect, must be seen, £1,250. 07841 267725.

FORD FIESTA ZETEC V reg, 1.25 Zetec, MoT'd, alloys, CL, good condition. £895. o.n.o. 01902 761824 or 07858 072721.

FORD FOCUS ZETEC 2003 03 reg, metallic grey, 3dr, EW, CL, long MoT, tax, Cal D, 67,000 miles, £1,050 ono. 07976 604237.

FORD KA 1.3 51 reg, blue, pas, CD, 12 months MoT, 57,000 miles, 60k, excellent condition, £975 ono. Call 07847 530723.

FORD MONDO 2.0 Ghia, X reg, long MoT, alloys, pas, all electric, MoT, tax, low bar, superb, £595 ono. 07904 714294.

FORD PUMA Millennium edition, build no 353, 2000, fsh, leather Recaros, MoT, bargain, £1,050. 01952 253009 or 07767 30516.

KIA CARENS Diesel, 40mpg, 03, long MoT, 2 months Tax, £600 spent MoT, swap for small diesel, 100k miles, 07906 143530.

KIA SEDONA SX, green, 7 seater, 2001, 2 months MoT low mileage, good condition. £1,500 ono. 07630 372022.

MAZDA 5 UNOS automatic, 1991, 83,000 miles, silver, must be seen, £1x and MoT. £1,350. 01562 632201 or 07928 307751.

MERCEDES C180 R reg, Auto, 80k, totally immaculate, 11 mths tax and MoT Mint Condition, pearl blue, £4,250. o.n.o. 01384 880194.

PEUGEOT 606 Independence 1.6 3dr, 51 reg, met green, 59k, 1 former lady keeper, full MoT, six months tax, £1,360. 07415 11113.

PEUGEOT 206 LX 1.1, 52 Reg, 2004, petrol, 6 months MoT, 61,800 miles, £1,500. 01902 831318 or 07956 568217.

PEUGEOT 306 Cabriolet, T reg, red, leather seats, long MoT, 87k, SH, alloys, six CD player, £1,395. 07923 725980 or 0121 8621793.

PEUGEOT 306 MERIDIAN Full MoT, Taxed, S, CD player, £1,400, 5dr, AC, stereo. £650. 07870 851575.

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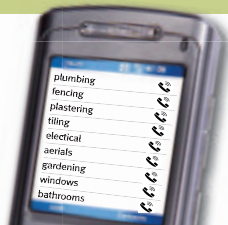
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sport

Stour poised to set points record

THE top two sides in Worcester Cricket League's Division One went head to head and Astwood Bank slightly got the better of Stourbridge with a winning draw.

It merely delayed the inevitable, though, with Stourbridge still ahead by 69 points and on track for a new points record, **writes Chris Marsh.**

Pershore had Lee Wilks (95 not out and 5-48) to thank as they narrowly beat lowly Redditch by three wickets. Nomads and Bromyard fought out

a thrilling tie, both making 252, with Nomads' number 10 smashing what looked a certain boundary at his partner on the last ball before running a single to level the scores. Romsley lost to Pedmore thanks to Danny McDonnell's 101no, and are surely doomed to Division Two cricket.

Bewdley beat Oldswinford by three wickets. In the final match Droitwich scored 313-8 thanks to Ian Cotterill's 106 but could not dislodge the final Worcester wicket.

In **Division Two**, with Colwall beat Kidderminster and Coombs Wood defeated fourth-placed Burghill, Hagley swept aside Feckenham for just 38 all out, Dominies beat Malvern and for Belbroughton, 15-year-old Ollie Hawker recorded 142 no as his team swept Netherton's 261-4 aside.

Monmouth's 308-3 was not enough to secure a winning draw despite Fraser Kilgour smashing 119 not out against Wormelow.

Division Three leaders Rushwick

overcame Harborne, while Alvechurch beat Chaddesley and Stourport thrashed Hilderton. Tenbury won the **Division Four** title by beating Brintons, and Stourbridge Social were beaten by Alveley. Martley who won away to overtake Ambicote at the foot of the table.

Division Five leaders Old Hill won at Bromsgrove and need just three points to clinch the title. Stourbridge beat Halesowen with 124 from Chris Norgrove.

POSITIVES TO TAKE FROM A STALEMATE

Stourbridge 0 Leamington 0

A SECOND goalless draw for the Glassboys against much fancied opposition in the space of four days – but by way of contrast to Saturday's absorbing encounter at Cambridge City, this was a dour, scrappy affair of few chances.

The two sides cancelled each other out for long spells with the midfield area congested and a plethora of high balls generally dealt with comfortably by the respective central defensive pairings.

With neither side willing to gamble to push extra men forward in the latter stages on Tuesday, the game petered out into an inevitable scoreless draw.

The two matches between Stourbridge and Leamington produced 12 goals last season, but the early stages of this game soon hinted there would be no repeat in an untidy opening quarter-of-an-hour or so with no goalmouth action.

The first drama of note came in the 19th minute when Ryan Rowe squandered a great chance for the hosts. The Glassboys striker appeared to be coming back from an offside position when the ball arrived at his feet and the assistant's flag went up. The ref ruled that a Leamington player had touched the ball into Rowe's path and over-ruled his colleague.

As the Leamington back-line half-stopped, Rowe turned to get away from Liam Daly, but having advanced into the left-hand side of the area, he planted his shot wide of the near post.

As half-time approached Leamington twice went close from set pieces.

In the 40th minute, a corner from Stephan Morley was met by Jacob Blyth whose header bounced narrowly wide, then in first-half stoppage time a free-kick from Morley dropped to Jamie Hood whose goal-bound shot was well blocked by midfielder James Dyson.

Speculative

Early in the second period a speculative low shot from Craig Owen was comfortably saved by Stourbridge stopper Lewis Solly before Stourbridge went close in the 50th minute.

Rowe fed Drew Canavan who laid the ball across to Josh Craddock on his outside who pulled his shot from the right-hand edge of the box wide of the far post.

The visitors responded two minutes later with James Husband firing in that Solly beat away to safety. Twenty minutes from time Husband pulled the ball back from the left for Richard Batchelor to work a shooting position, but Solly was equal to his low strike.

At the other end, Canavan sent over a free-kick from the left and Rowe got in a header that flew straight at Tony Breeden in the Leamington goal. In the dying moments Husband shot wide for the visitors from the last chance of the night.

Stourbridge will be pleased with the start they have made to the new campaign, but Leamington will probably have been the happier team as they managed to pick up their first point from the War Memorial Athletic Ground since 2005-06.

Glassboys in battle to claim deserved point

GOALLESS it may have been, but this was an absorbing contest between two sides hoping to be in promotion contention at the end of the season.

A bright opening saw Sam Smith go closest early on, then in the eighth minute, Aaron Griffiths came forward from left-back and rolled a pass through to Ryan Rowe who quickly laid the ball off into the path of Leon Broadhurst, but he screwed his shot off-target.

Stourbridge threatened on 18 minutes as a corner from Geddes was only half-cleared to Drew Canavan who hit a shot which deflected into the air and Rowe got in a header that City keeper Zac Barrett saved.

A minute later Stourbridge went close as Geddes struck a drive that rattled Barrett's left-hand upright.

The Glassboys might have found themselves a goal down as Solly advanced from his line only to kick his attempted clearance straight to Craig Hammond.

The home side's best chance came in the 25th minute as a poor pass cut out by Ade Cambridge who fed the ball to Hammond

who rode the challenge of Smith before striking his low shot past the far post.

On 38 minutes Geddes whipped in a deep free-kick, Paul McCone appeared to get in a glancing header that clipped the post. A 25-yard drive from Geddes then drew a good save from Barrett and just before the break, Broadhurst hit a low shot too close to Barrett.

In the 45th minute Liam

Cambridge City 0 Stourbridge 0

Nicoll hit a rising 20-yard shot wide, but two minutes later Stourbridge were back on the attack.

A throw-in from Griffiths enabled Rowe to combine with Sam Rock who ran with the ball before opting to shoot. His effort was blocked by Barrett. Stourbridge were again denied in the 68th minute when Griffiths crossed from the left towards the far post and Rowe directed a header on-target only to see defender Alex Lacey head the ball off the line.

City hit back seven minutes later with Hammond playing a delightful pass inside McCone for Luke Robins to shot from the left only to be blocked by the legs of Solly.

Stourbridge had one other opportunity to grab victory in the 79th minute as a right-wing corner from Geddes was kept alive by Griffiths on the left. He found Canavan in a good position but he pulled his shot wide of the near post.

Unbeaten Yeltz fail to hit the target against unfancied Yate

Yate Town 0 Halesowen Town 0

HALESOWEN remained unbeaten but couldn't quite find enough spark to secure a winner in a disappointing stalemate at lowly Yate on Tuesday.

Halesowen's Nathan Jackson received a 14th-minute yellow card, and busy Yeltz keeper Evans was on hand to save a Tyrone Mings free-kick in the 21st minute.

At the start of the second period Gueyes struck just wide and Andrew Westwood went close from a Nathaniel Caines cross as Halesowen put pressure on Dempsey's goal.

Captain Gavin Saunders came closest to snatching victory when his 77th minute shot from 20 yards was superbly clawed out from under the crossbar by Dempsey.

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Two riders hurt in Dudley defeat



Ashley Morris takes a tumble while on a double-point ride against Stoke

Pledge by Heathens after team takes a thrashing

DUDLEY Heathens are promising free entry for children next week and an extra end of season meeting after their heaviest home defeat since reforming.

And the club is also looking at further signings after two riders were injured in a crushing 64-27 home defeat to Stoke on Tuesday.

An uphill task against the National League leaders became Everest-like after Dudley lost both reserves to a heat two crash.

With Richard Franklin and Danny Stoneman sidelined by shoulder and elbow injuries respectively, the Heathens could track only one rider in no fewer than six races.

Franklin's injury was confirmed the following day as a broken shoulder, ruling him out for the rest of the season.

Positives

Tuesday was probably the darkest day for the club's management team since the Heathens relaunched, but chairman Nigel Pearson insisted that the positives outweigh the negatives.

"It's less than two years since we actually formed the Heathens," he said.

"We finished top of the league last year; we've won the National Shield this year and the National League Fours. We've provided a lot of entertainment.



Gloom for Tom Perry, right, beset by carburettor problems, and team boss Will Pottinger

"Obviously, it's disappointing. We want the fans to come along and enjoy our last two home matches – next Tuesday against Buxton it's kids for free, because there are a lot of disappointed kids' faces there on the front row," he added.

Pearson cited the loss of Franklin and Stoneman as well as mechanical woes for Tom Perry as contributory factors to the defeat.

"Tom's had carburettor problems and was in points scoring positions – possibly five or six points lost," he said.

"And there's been some races where we've just been

outclassed by better riders. There are reasons, but we're not looking to make massive excuses. We have been beaten by a better side in Stoke who could go on and win the National League."

Stoneman is having his injury assessed but is clearly doubtful for next Tuesday's clash with Buxton.

Strongest

"We've got to look at tracking the strongest possible side we can for our remaining three league meetings – two home matches and a trip to the Isle of Wight," added Pearson.

"We're already looking at

the averages; we're already looking at potential riders that could maybe come in and we will do what we've got to do to try to end the season on a winning note.

"I've got to make the play-offs I can guarantee our supporters that won't be the end of the season."

"After September 6 against King's Lynn we will have at least one more meeting to round the season off. So it's not all over yet."

Dudley: Ashley Morris 8, Jon Armstrong 7, Jamie Courtney 5, Tom Perry 4, Darryl Ritchings 3, Richard Franklin 0, Danny Stoneman 0.

Stoke: Simon Lambert 17+1, Jamie Pickard 14+1, Tony Atkin 12+2, James Sergeant 10+1, Gareth Isherwood 7+2, Ben Reade 4+2.

Division undecided as leaders play out a real thriller

Astwood Bank (15pts) 210-9, Stourbridge (9pts) 187-8.

Draw

IN six hours 40 minutes, 397 runs were scored, 17 wickets fell and the championship was at stake.

League leaders Stourbridge firsts battled against the contenders Astwood Bank and the result will keep doors slightly ajar for an upset with four matches of the 2011 season remaining, **writes Harilal Patel.**

Stour captain Richard Bradley won the toss and asked Steve Adhead's team to bat. It was Astwood skipper who was first to go, caught by keeper Matt Bradley for a duck off James Musk's delivery. Tom Pedley, the other opener, was Bradley's second victim, gone for four.

Paul Boycott and Christopher Perkins put on 42 runs. Kalpesh Patel struck in the 20th over bowling Perkins for 20. When Dave Jones saw off Boycott for 23, Bradley took his third catch.

With Astwood struggling at 66-4, Pete Alexander and Samuel Churchley counter-attacked by putting on 96 off 102 balls.

Fortunes turned in Stour's favour when Churcheley was run out for 63. Patel had Alexander caught for 64 in the 44th over, but Astwood's tail took the score to 210. Stour found Tom Harris bowling a handful. He had Matt Bradley caught off a lifter for 11 and bowled Josh Banks for a duck.

Skipper Richard Bradley and Steve Game then put on 38 runs. Mathew Desmond replaced Pete Alexander and had Steve Game stretching to be stumped by Steve Adhead for 23. Next to go was Richard Bradley judged lbw for 38.

The turning point came when Andy Alexander mis-hooked a delivery from Harris in the 29th over to be caught for 13. On 160, Alex Bingham skied one from Freeman for Perkins to take the catch running in from the boundary – out for 27.

Musk nicked one from Tom Harris to be caught for 51 and Stour had to bat out, finishing on 187-8.

Astwood Bank (14pts) 227-6, Stourbridge (8pts) 222-6.

Draw

A 153-run partnership between Sam Thomas (66) and Andy Williams (106) helped the home side to 227-6 off 42 overs. James Wood's six overs cost 47 runs but netted three wickets. Opener Ryan Willems gave the visitors a good start scoring 51 Stumped off the bowling of Haslam. James Wood (52) and James Winders took Stour in reach but they did not have enough overs.

Stourbridge (24pts) 243, Halesowen (6pts) 164. Stourbridge won by 79 runs

A skipper's knock of 124, a maiden century, by Christopher Norgrove ensured Stour's third win. Halesowen struggled to 164 all out, with Geoff Smith on 22.

Stourbridge (1pt) 131, Halesowen (24pts) 132-2. Halesowen won by eight wickets

Dion Patel took five wickets for an easy home win.

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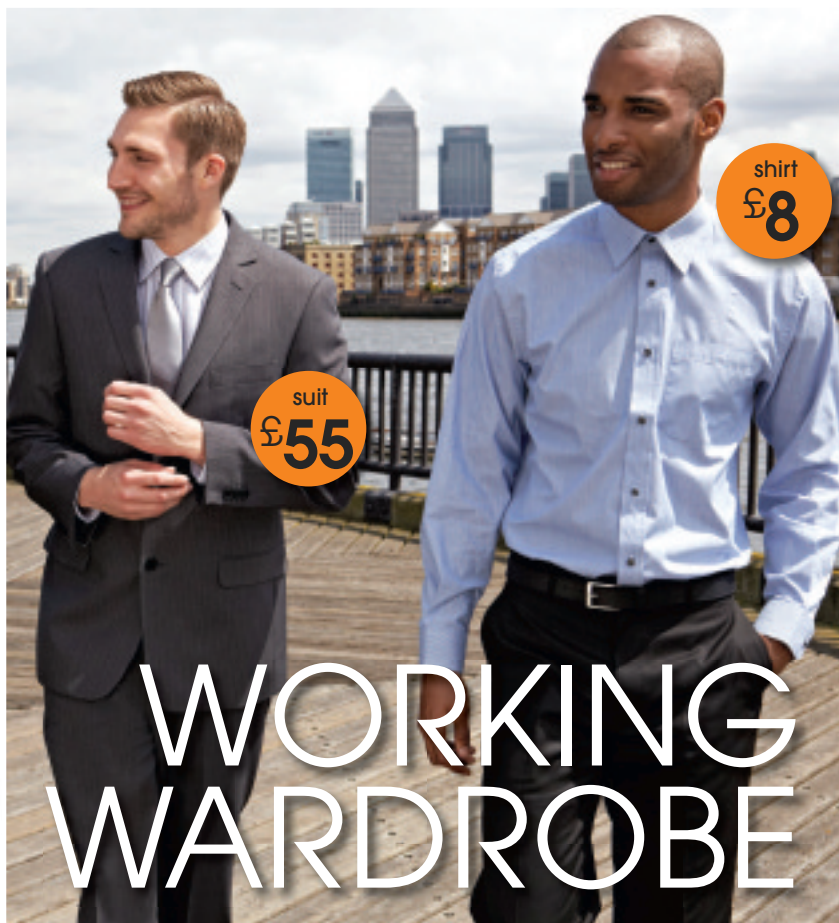
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